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The Nation

April 13, 1985 $1.25; U.K. 65p

EDITORIAL

IN PRAISE OF SMALLNESS

From April 12 to 14, representatives from dozens of journals of critical opinion—reading from left to right—will descend on the University of Southern California in Los Angeles to debate differences and explore common interests. What, it might be asked, do *Socialist Review*, *National Review* and *Partisan Review*, not to mention *The New Republic* and *The Nation*, have in common? And who cares about the small-circulation magazine at a time of massive media mergers? The answers are (a) problems, and (b) believers in intellectual diversity.

The takeovers, the amalgamation of independent dailies and bookstores into chains and the bottom-line orientation of media conglomerates have left small-circulation journals with something of a monopoly on the business of germinating ideas and discovering writers.

Whether left-liberal journals like *The Nation* can (or should) make common cause with right-wing, religious or value-free social science journals in tackling mundane problems like rapidly rising postal rates, newsstand distribution bottlenecks and deficit reduction remains to be seen. But of the vital role such periodicals play in the intellectual life of the nation there is no doubt, and ways to strengthen that role in a rapidly changing media environment should be explored. As Carey McWilliams, who edited this magazine for many years, put it a quarter-century ago:

> Above all, the small-circulation magazines provide the seedbed for ideas which are often fragile at birth and require nurture, pruning and careful editorial cultivation all as part of the mysterious, never fully understood process by which they are finally projected out into the society for discussion, debate and possible testimony. They are vital, indispensable functions which the mass media cannot perform.

REAGAN'S PROPAGANDA BLITZ
Robert Borosage
Peter Kornbluh

FOUR YEARS OF SECRECY
Lois P. Sheinfeld

MUZZLING FEDERAL UNIONS
Keith A. Sinzinger

'EXODUS AND REVOLUTION'
Bernard Avishai

BIG CHANGES
Andrew Kopkind

INTO PINOCHET'S CHILE—I

RETURN TO A COUNTRY OF EXILES

ARIEL DORFMAN

Among the many telegrams Ronald Reagan received on November 7, 1984, one offered the congratulations of Chile's ruler, Gen. Augusto Pinochet. At the very moment, perhaps, that hands in Washington were opening that message, a raid was being conducted by thirty Chilean secret-police agents on an apartment in Santiago where, for the previous few months, a loose coalition of democratic socialist parties known as the Bloque Socialista, or Socialist Bloc, had been meeting. In similar raids all over Santiago, dozens of dissidents were being rounded up and interrogated.

The raiders were not only interested in the opposition leaders; they had also come for the booty. They stole the typewriters, the telephone, the furniture, the lamps, even the toilet paper—anything that could be converted into cash. Except for the man in charge of the operation, apparently an army captain, they all wore ski masks. Later, they did not have to worry about concealing their identities because the prisoners' eyes were taped.

An old friend of mine, Lucho Alvarado, was one of the opposition leaders in the apartment that day. It was his second arrest. After President Salvador Allende was murdered, in the coup of September 11, 1973, Alvarado went underground. There was reason to suspect that the military might arrest him. He had directed a public agency that provided housing for the poor and, in the last desperate months of Allende's government, had worked in the presidential palace, helping to organize against the impending military takeover. But after three

(*Continued on Page 434*)

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LETTERS.

'A MAN OF PRINCIPLE'

New York City

I was glad to see Alexander Cockburn's February 9 column mention Seymour Peck's 1956 confrontation with the Senate Internal Security Committee, but the concluding sentence ("On the advice of his counsel, Telford Taylor, he did not invoke the First or Fifth amendment but, more vaguely, cited constitutional guarantees, in a testimony of dignity and courage") is inaccurate.

Sy Peck was a man of principle, and it was his principles primarily, and my advice only secondarily, that determined the legal position he took before the Senate committee.

When Sy initially consulted me, he had already decided (and firmly) that he would answer questions about his own past Communist Party membership, but would not reply to questions about other people with whom he had then been associated.

This stance ruled out any use of the Fifth Amendment's privilege against self-incrimination because the Supreme Court had recently held that while a witness could not be required to testify concerning matters that might incriminate him, if he chose to answer such questions about himself he could not thereafter invoke the privilege with respect to questions the answers to which might incriminate others [*Rogers v. United States*, 340 U.S. 367 (1951)].

Furthermore, Sy's supervisors at *The New York Times* had told him that if he relied on the Fifth Amendment, his continued employment would be jeopardized. In these circumstances, "taking the Fifth" would have been of no avail to him in terms of either principle or expediency.

Accordingly, when Sy told me (and the late Joseph Fanelli, a Washington lawyer who joined me in handling Sy's case) that he wished to describe his own past Communist affiliations but not those of others, I advised him to invoke the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech and association as a basis for challenging the Senate committee's right to require answers to such questions. I then helped him prepare a statement of his position and present it to the committee. And that is what Sy did when he was called to testify.

He was tried in the Federal District Court in Washington before the late Judge Luther Youngdahl, and convicted of statutory contempt of Congress. But before we had completed our appeal to a U.S. Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court decided *Watkins v. United States*, 354 U.S. 178 (1957), wherein the Court reversed the conviction of a witness who had taken a position similar to Sy's before the House Un-American Activities Committee, on the ground that the committee had not adequately informed him of the purpose for which the question was asked.

Since the same flaw was present in Sy's case, we moved before Judge Youngdahl that his indictment be dismissed. And so it was, and Sy had no further difficulties of this sort. *Telford Taylor*

COCKBURN REPLIES

New York City

A longtime colleague of Seymour Peck told me that such had been Telford Taylor's advice, and in reading Peck's testimony I could find no specific invocation of the First Amendment. But I should have checked with Taylor. Apropos my item on Peck, another lawyer who had represented many individuals undergoing ordeals similar to Peck's wrote to me privately, and I would like to put one of his salutary comments on the record:

> I am troubled by your observation that he [Peck] did not invoke the First or Fifth amendment to stand off his Congressional inquisition because I disagree with the implicit suggestion that it would somehow have been less principled for him to have done so. . . . I think it terribly wrong to adopt the premise of the inquisition that there was something wrong, or cowardly, or unprincipled about invoking a specific constitutional protection for the purpose for which it was intended. . . .to the contrary, it seems to me that those who invoked the specific provisions of the Bill of Rights better advanced them, for, as life teaches, you lose it if you don't use it.

Alexander Cockburn

BIG-CITY PROVINCIALISM

Grantville, Kan.

I have no quarrel with Martin Garbus's article "Wrong Case, Wrong Place, Wrong Result" [Feb. 16], except for its first sentence, which says, "The press's reaction to the verdict in *Ariel Sharon v. Time Inc.* was astonishing." Thereafter, the only two newspapers that are cited are *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. *The Times* is quoted as saying the verdict affirmed "the law's special protections for a free press." *The Post* is reported as saying the decision upheld the Supreme Court's purpose in protecting free speech. The implication is that these two newspapers constitute the press, which is satisfied that all is well with the First Amendment.

Unfortunately, the equation of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* with the press has become a common practice nationwide. I could cite dozens of examples, including some in previous articles in *The Nation*. This tendency gives the erroneous impression that the press nationwide has homogenized opinions.

In its first editorial on the Sharon suit, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*—taking much the same position as Garbus—said the case should have been dismissed before it went to trial. In its most recent editorial, the *Post-Dispatch* repeated that view and said the press could feel relief but not gratification over the outcome.

Please do your part in future not to contribute to the all-too-prevalent notion that *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* speak for the press. *John Lofton*
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

NO PITH IN PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Yo! You've got an egregious error in Calvin Trillin's February 23 "Uncivil Liberties." In a column where he claims authorship of some of America's most perspicaciously moving mottoes, Trillin sorely spoils the language and image of his friends in Pennsylvania. Trillin claims to have seen a Pennsylvania license plate reading, "You Have a Friend in Pennsylvania." Untrue. Impossible. Too pithy and prosaic for us. Sounds too much like the motto of the Madison Avenue consultant Trillin hopes to become. The new state motto, replacing the cracklingly concise "Keystone State," is "You've Got a Friend in Pennsylvania." You've got to watch your facts. Your Friend in Pennsylvania, *Michael A. Hindery*

TRILLIN REPLIES

New York City

I try to avoid anything in the column that smacks of overt accuracy, and I had thought I could count on people from Philadelphia to do the same. *Calvin Trillin*

CORRECTION

Due to a trans-Atlantic misunderstanding at this end, comments in support of the Strategic Defense Initiative quoted in E.P. Thompson's March 9 article, "The Real Meaning of Star Wars," were erroneously attributed to an editorial in *The New York Times*. They appeared in a *Times* of London editorial.

The Nation welcomes letters—typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Letters may be edited for reasons of space.

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Manuscripts: All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes.

Publisher, Hamilton Fish 3rd

Associate Publisher, David Parker; *Advertising Director,* Chris Calhoun; *Business Manager,* Ann B. Epstein; *Bookkeeper,* Ivor A. Richardson; *Art/Production Manager,* Jane Sharples; *Circulation Manager,* Stephen W. Soule; *Subscription Manager,* Cookee V. Klein; *Assistant Advertising Manager,* Neil Black; *Receptionist,* Greta Loell; *Mail Clerk,* John Holtz; *Administrative Secretary,* Shirley Sulat; *Production,* Terry Miller; *Typography,* David Acker, Christopher Bille; *Nation Associates,* Claudine Bacher; *Nation News Service,* Jeff Sorensen.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by Nation Enterprises and © 1985 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. (212) 242-8400. *Washington Office*: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington DC 20002 (202) 546-2239. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION.

Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries should be sent to: *The Nation,* Subscription Services, Box 1953, Marion, OH 43305. *Regular Subscription Price:* One year, $40; two years, $72; six months, $20. Add $7 per year postage Canada, Mexico; $13 per year other foreign. Claims for missed issues must be made within 60 days (120 days, foreign) of publication date; back issues available $3 prepaid ($4 foreign). **Please allow 6-8 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions.** *The Nation* is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

EDITORIALS.

Salvadoran Hopes

The victory of José Napoleón Duarte's Christian Democratic Party in El Salvador's parliamentary and mayoral elections has yet to be officially confirmed. Last week, however, right-wing parties seeking to nullify the electoral proceedings were rebuffed by the electoral commission and by the army high command. Salvadorans now recognize that the Christian Democrats scored an impressive upset over the right-center coalition led by the demagogic Col. Roberto d'Aubuisson, which had at least tacit support from the officially neutral U.S. Embassy. Whatever the final tally, Duarte's achievement has changed the Salvadoran political landscape.

This much is clear: Salvadorans voted for peace, prosperity and reform—not because Duarte has brought them those blessings but because he offered the only hope on election day. His tentative moves toward a dialogue with the Salvadoran left and the guerrillas of the Farabundo Martí Liberation Front won widespread approval among the people, even in the peasant villages where d'Aubuisson's Arena Party has held sway. Since Duarte won the presidency thirteen months ago, U.S. money has poured into the country at an estimated rate of $1.5 million a day, bolstering the army, raising consumption levels for the upper class, and

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improving basic services. In some areas that had no electricity for a year, the lights went back on eight days before the elections. The land reforms and civil liberties protections Duarte promised have been stalled and in many cases reversed by right-wing opposition. But Salvadorans who hope for economic and social justice were allowed no political alternative to the Christian Democratic candidates. In the cities, left-wing union members voted for the Christian Democrats, and in much of the countryside the guerrillas advised peasants to do the same.

Despite his good standing with Christian Democratic parties around the world and with Reagan's opponents in the U.S. foreign policy establishment, Duarte has yet to consolidate his political power in El Salvador. He has not delivered on his promise to find a "third way" between developing socialism and oligarchic capitalism, between the model presented by Nicaragua and the examples provided by almost every other country in the region. The army and the economy are increasingly dependent on the United States, and local investment is at a standstill. The hundreds of millions of dollars inundating the country create dependence, not growth. At this point, the money buys popularity for Duarte and hope for many Salvadorans. It has brought change in the long Salvadoran crisis, but it has not convinced anyone that a solution is at hand.

Kampelmania

No one deserves more credit for President Reagan's MX missile victory in Congress than Max Kampelman, the disarmament negotiator who took a brief break from selling Star Wars to the Russians in Switzerland to lay in more merchandise of death in Washington. As a member of the negotiating team at Geneva, Kampelman was perfect for the job. He convinced gullible senators and representatives that the missiles constituted a bargaining chip in the arms talks. His history as a freelance diplomat—he served both Carter and Reagan at the European Security Conference in Madrid—conferred an additional cachet: he is remembered for grandstanding in that body on Andrei Sakharov while everyone else was trying to find ways to prevent mutual annihilation. But most of all, Kampelman had ideological standing as the quintessential cold war liberal. A former union researcher, aide to Hubert Humphrey and Jewish leader, his lifelong attacks on the left have earned him honor and rewards from the right.

Three decades before his missile-defense effort, Kampelman won another fight in Congress: passage of Humphrey's Communist Control Act of 1954. As Humphrey's legislative assistant, Kampelman formulated the plan to outlaw the Communist Party as a criminal conspiracy, a particularly sleazy strategy to immunize Democratic politicians from the McCarthyite plague at the expense of constitutional liberties. Both parts of the plan worked. Humphrey and his fellow liberals held their Congressional seats, and freedom for radical action was curtailed.

As the years wore on and Kampelman amassed a personal fortune as a bank director and corporate lawyer, his formula for success never varied. He teamed up with Jeane Kirkpatrick to write *The Strategy of Deception*, a defense of countermeasures-in-kind against the worldwide Communist conspiracy, which for many years was the standard textbook for C.I.A. hard-liners. He was a crony of Lyndon Johnson and a hawk on Vietnam, and in 1976 he helped inspire the cold war renaissance as a founder of the Committee on the Present Danger, which provided the platform for the neoconservative movement, the Israel lobby (Kampelman has been a leader of both the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League) and, later, Democrats for Reagan. He himself stayed in the Carter and Mondale camps but, like Kirkpatrick, worked both sides of the political street. His Democratic affiliation, like his erstwhile liberalism, was a valuable bargaining chip in the high-level power game.

The Kampelman doctrine is no longer the commanding principle in Washington. Reaganism is. The clout of the old Democratic entrepreneurs is small compared with the rule of the Republican right. But Democrats with links to liberals, campaign financiers and those abstract entities the press labels "international opinion makers," the "intelligence community" and "the media" play a significant role in mobilizing power behind the rulers. Kampelman fits his new part to a tee, and Ronald Reagan must thank Hubert Humphrey for giving him help when it was needed.

Judging Judges

We have had our differences with Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan [see the special issue, "Moynihan: The Conscience of a Neoconservative," September 22, 1979], but we have no trouble seconding Stephen Gillers's view that he has distinguished himself in one area—judicial selection. As Gillers wrote in *The Nation*, "In most places, lawyers who want to be judges become politically active. In New York, lawyers who want to be Federal trial judges complete a twelve-page questionnaire containing thirty-seven questions. An eleven-member panel screens applicants and recommends nominees to Senator Moynihan, who created the panel." Under an agreement with his Republican counterpart, Senator Alphonse D'Amato, Moynihan proposes one nominee for every four Federal judicial openings in the state.

In short, the Senator's judicial-selection process makes merit, rather than politics, the chief criterion. Judges Abraham Sofaer and Pierre Leval, whose handling of the recent Sharon and Westmoreland libel trials, respectively, drew high praise, were products of the Moynihan mill.

Senators, however, can only propose: the President nominates, and the evidence shows that in Washington, ideology reigns. During the remaining years of his incumbency, Reagan could appoint up to 115 Federal judges; he has

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already filled 165 vacancies on the district and appellate benches. That means that by 1988 more than half the Federal judiciary might be composed of Reagan appointees.

In the selection of virtually all of them, ideological fitness rather than judicial aptitude has been the primary consideration. Sheldon Goldman of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst studied the President's first 165 choices and found that nearly all are Republicans and almost one-fourth are millionaires. He chose only two blacks. No wonder Senator Howard Metzenbaum asked recently if the Administration would apply an "ideological litmus test" to candidates for the bench.

Which brings us back to Senator Moynihan. More than a year ago he recommended William Hellerstein, a lawyer with the Legal Aid Society, for a Federal judgeship; recently the White House vetoed Hellerstein. According to *The New York Times*, Administration officials said that while Hellerstein was fully qualified, his political views were incompatible with the President's. Knowing Reagan's dislike for the Legal Services Corporation in particular, and poor people's lawyers in general, that comes as no surprise.

Hellerstein, who says he feels his political opinions should not be grounds for disqualification, notes that no one in the White House or the Justice Department took the trouble to interview him on his judicial philosophy. And what is Hellerstein's judicial philosophy? "Very simple," he said when we asked him. "I believe a judge should look at what's before him and decide based on judicial precedent and the facts." Clearly, a person with such outlandish ideas has no place on the Reagan bench.

Toxic Town, U.S.A.

In 1982 the Arthur D. Little Company, a giant consulting firm, contracted with the Defense Department to test the chemical warfare agent VX and other nerve and mustard gases. When the company's Cambridge, Massachusetts, neighbors found out, they quickly organized the North Cambridge Toxic Alert. In March 1984, responding to their pressure, the city ordered Arthur D. Little to stop testing the chemicals, but the company won a restraining order against the ban. On February 26, a State Superior Court judge ruled in the city's favor, and the company appealed.

Research in toxic chemicals is big business. Arthur D. Little's commitment to it is reflected in its combative stance in court and in the costly publicity campaign it is running to allay townspeople's fears. Researchers at the company's new million-dollar Levins Laboratory at its Acorn Park facility test toxic substances for corporate clients as well as for the Army, and company representatives say they expect to be awarded still more contracts for nerve gas.

Business should be good. If the Reagan Administration gets its way, the Defense Department will spend more than $1 billion in the next fiscal year on chemical warfare programs.

Arthur D. Little earns its share of C.W. money by developing methods to detect minute amounts of toxic agents in the environment, figuring out how to detoxify the agents and making protective clothing and equipment for people doing the detoxifying. The company's representatives point out that its nerve gas research is for defensive purposes only. But the products of that research cannot be strictly defensive or inapplicable to military uses. Protective clothing developed for crews assigned to clean up Sarin-GB storage tanks could also be used by NATO troops in West Germany. Instruments that detect minute amounts of VX in the atmosphere could help advancing soldiers avoid areas where the enemy has laid down a chemical screen. Methods for quickly detoxifying equipment and personnel would be tremendously useful to rapidly advancing ground forces who are met by chemical attack.

Just how great a risk does the Levins Laboratory pose to Cambridge residents? A scientific advisory committee of the City Council drew up a worst-case scenario in which several hundred people would be killed by escaping nerve gas. Arthur D. Little's director of health and safety, Scott Stricoff, estimated that if gas was released following an explosion, about half the people living within two-thirds of a mile of the lab would die. Given favorable (rather, unfavorable) winds, that "zone of lethality" would extend even farther.

Alma Triner, the company's vice president for public relations, calls the Levins Laboratory "the safest lab of its kind anywhere in the world." But accidents have occurred in nerve gas facilities, and now that public concern about the likelihood of nonmilitary chemical accidents has been raised in the wake of the Bhopal disaster, such testimonials don't count for much. (A member of the North Cambridge Toxic Alert said company officials assured the group that there was no comparison between the two facilities because Union Carbide employed unskilled workers, while Levins is staffed by highly skilled researchers.)

The only safety standards for handling nerve agents were written by the Defense Department. No E.P.A., OSHA or state guidelines apply. Although this isn't surprising, the lack of consistent and effective Federal guidelines is a serious matter. Only a patchwork of state and Federal environmental safety laws, written in response to specific problems, regulate hazardous-waste treatment, for example. Nothing prevents a company from constructing a laboratory in a densely populated area to test substances that are a thousand times more deadly than chlorine gas.

And Arthur D. Little is just one of many U.S. companies hired by the Defense Department to conduct nerve gas research. In other communities, industries large and small work with hazardous substances like arsine or phosphine. The absence of a national policy on research in supertoxic substances forces those communities to fight their own battles. Cambridge residents have the resources and the expertise to challenge one of the largest consulting firms in the world, but others may face an unequal struggle.

THOMAS KIELY

Thomas Kiely is a Boston-based writer whose work has appeared in In These Times *and elsewhere.*

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

We live in a time so awful that there is a serious subdivision of scholarship known as Holocaust studies. The research into genocide is a subtext in the work of historians, lawyers, political scientists and psychologists. It also forms a powerful element in the imagination of novelists, artists, playwrights, poets and film directors. The idea of the planned destruction of a whole people is one of our grand modern themes, and even the insistent call "Never again!" represents a half-buried fear of repetition. The fascination of the subject seems inexhaustible; almost, at times, pornographic. It may have something to do with the sick covenant that our leaders have made with nuclear weapons, and with the grotesque Armageddon babble that can be heard even at the highest levels of government. Genocide, anyway, has become a subject in its own right. And recent books such as David Wyman's *The Abandonment of the Jews* have begun to examine more minutely not the pathology of the mass murderers but the moral standing of those who watched with folded arms.

This month, as Christians celebrate the Resurrection and Jews keep Passover and atheists ponder the persistence of millennial optimism, Armenians will gather in solemn meetings to remember the first genocide of the twentieth century. It was in April 1915 that the Turks began the systematic depopulation of an ancient, civilized country. By 1923, under successor governments, the job had been more or less done. No less than a million Armenians had been slaughtered; starvation and pestilence, used as deliberate weapons of Turkish policy, accounted for many thousands more. The nation of Armenia was erased from official Turkish maps, though it continues to survive in the memories of refugees and their descendants. This much is beyond doubt: The genocidal policy was officially affirmed in 1915 by Minister of the Interior Talaat Bey, who had ordered "the elimination of the Armenian element." The slaughter was confirmed by one of the chief witnesses of the Armenian holocaust, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Henry Morgenthau, who described what he termed "race extermination" in his cables to the State Department.

This ghastly precedent was suggested to at least one mind. As he was planning his own Final Solution, and preparing to make his move against Poland and the East, Adolf Hitler was asked if he had no fear of discovery. He replied, "Who now remembers the Armenians?" His question has now been answered, and in the most cynical way, by Caspar Weinberger.

On February 21, he made an appearance before the House Foreign Affairs Committee and opposed a simple, humane, nonpartisan resolution that would designate April 24 as a national day of remembrance for Armenian victims. The terms in which he spoke were highly revealing:

> With reference to "Armenian Genocide" in Turkey between 1915 and 1923. Whatever the merits of such remembrance, we believe such resolutions are counterproductive in that they serve to encourage Armenian terrorists who have killed more than fifty Turkish citizens, mostly diplomats, over the past years. Some murders have also occurred in the United States. We also believe that consideration of this resolution would embarrass the United States and strain relations with this critical ally. For these reasons, I hope you give your support to preventing favorable action on this resolution and preventing the introduction of others like it.

Weinberger twice put the words "Armenian Genocide" in quotation marks, and at one point in his prepared statement he referred to it as "so-called." His remarks thus contained three calculated insults. The first is the ignorant assertion that the Armenians have no grievance, a callous denial which the Secretary did not dignify with supporting evidence. Second is the crude slippage from Armenian sympathizers to Armenian "terrorists"—standard Administration casuistry in all cases but unusually crass in this one. Third is the frank admission that the United States places relations with an ally above all considerations of historical truth and present justice.

This is precisely the mentality of those who found excuses for doing nothing about the Final Solution in Central Europe between 1941 and 1945; those in London and Washington who ignored the pleas of European Jewry and who placed the Auschwitz and Treblinka files on inaccessible shelves. It does not surprise me. Caspar Weinberger is a man with a long record as a liar and an opportunist. He is also the man who tries to sucker Congress into supporting first-strike weaponry that will enrich the businesses he really represents. Such a man stinks of his European predecessors—the morally neutral oven contractor and the crematorium concessionnaire. But need he, in his haste to appease Turkey, have wounded the Armenians on this of all anniversaries?

Unfortunately, Weinberger is not alone. In 1982, the State Department's *Bulletin* published a background briefing on Armenia in which the word "alleged" appears every time the word "massacre" or "genocide" is employed. At the end of the article comes a little note, which reads:

> Because the historical record of the 1915 events in Asia Minor is ambiguous, the Department of State does not endorse allegations that the Turkish government commmitted a genocide against the Armenian people.

Since the genocide either did or did not take place, that is saying that the State Department believes it did not. Start by calling something alleged, and you end by denying it altogether. It is as if the United States government were to cast doubt on some random account of the extermination of the Jews, say that the evidence for the Holocaust was mixed and appeal to Congress to drop the entire subject because it might offend Saudi Arabia. The Armenians have already suffered genocide and dispersal. They demand of the Turks only that they acknowledge what happened and apologize, as the Germans did. In calling this "counterproductive," and blaming the victims as he does, Weinberger prostitutes his office and defames the Armenians in one of the most important countries of their diaspora.

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ARTICLES.

THE SMEAR–NICARAGUA CAMPAIGN

Behind Reagan's Propaganda Blitz

ROBERT BOROSAGE AND PETER KORNBLUH

On February 16, Ronald Reagan launched a massive propaganda offensive in behalf of U.S. aid to the rebels fighting to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. Reporters who were camped outside the President's Rancho del Cielo in Santa Barbara were told that his radio address to the nation, in which he hailed the *contras* as "our brothers" and compared assisting them to French support for the American Revolution, was the beginning of an "educational drive" to win public support for $14 million to renew Central Intelligence Agency operations in Nicaragua.

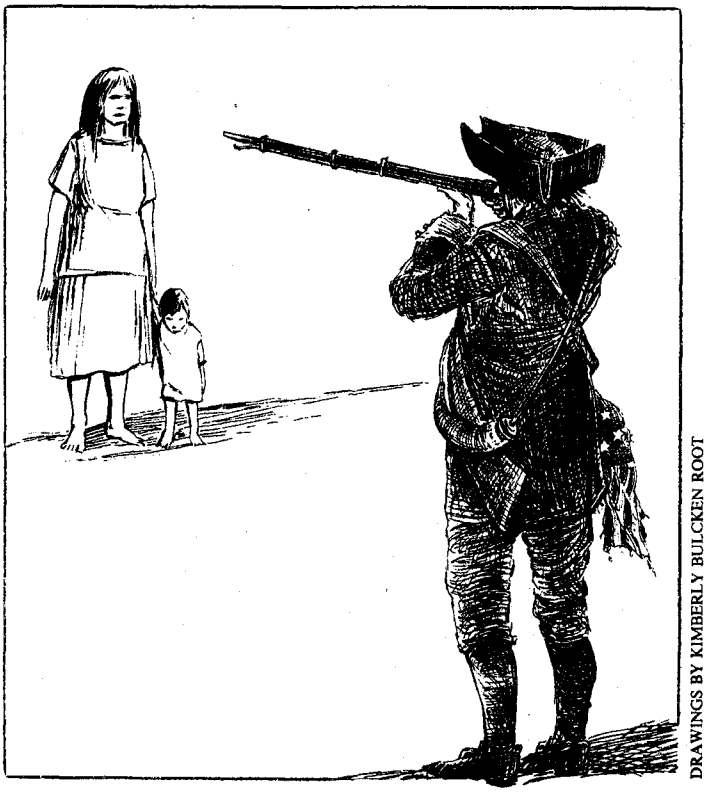
Since then, the Administration's propaganda machine has shifted into high gear. Its latest production, a glossy multicolored "white paper" titled *The Soviet-Cuban Connection*, depicts Nicaragua as a military threat to its neighbors and is intended to lend credibility to the Administration's diatribe against what Secretary of State George Shultz calls the Sandinistas' "bad-news government." Almost daily, Shultz and other Administration mudslingers have hurled insults at the Sandinistas. Meanwhile the President has canonized the *contras* as the "moral equal of our Founding Fathers." In recent weeks, *contra* leaders from the Nicaraguan Democratic Force and ARDE have trooped through Washington, trying to convince members of Congress that they are not the terrorists guilty of systematic atrocities against civilians, as reported recently by prominent human rights organizations, but rather democratic freedom fighters, deserving of U.S. financial support.

But the Administration is playing for higher stakes than petty cash for the *contras*. For U.S. policy-makers, Nicaragua has become the test case of a strategy to seize the offensive against the Soviet Union by sponsoring insurgencies in the Third World. The so-called covert war, which ironically has received lavish publicity, is but one component of a broader policy of "low-intensity warfare" against Nicaragua: protracted paramilitary, economic and psychological pressures designed to erode the Sandinistas' popular base until the regime collapses from within, becomes an easy mark for external invasion or, in the President's words, learns to "say uncle." To salvage this war against the Sandinistas, Reagan has escalated his four-year campaign of distortion and disinformation against the U.S. public.

The Reagan Administration's propaganda war actually predates C.I.A. involvement with the *contras*. On February 23, 1981, two weeks before the President signed his initial authorization for the agency's campaign against the Sandinistas, the Reagan State Department released its first white paper on the region, "Communist Interference in El Salvador." The report, received with great fanfare by the press, subsequently became a major public relations embarrassment for the Administration [see James Petras, "White Paper on the White Paper," *The Nation*, March 28, 1981]. Claims that "200 tons" of weapons had been delivered to the Salvadoran guerrillas, "mostly through Cuba and Nicaragua," were not substantiated by the captured documents that allegedly had served as the basis for the report. Even the white paper's author, Jon Glassman, admitted to *The Wall Street Journal* that the statistics on the arms flow were based on extrapolation and that parts of the report were "misleading" and "overembellished."

The use of propaganda became more important to the White House in March 1982, after the C.I.A.'s operations were exposed in the press. To counter the negative public reaction, the Administration began a frenetic campaign "to convince skeptics," according to *Time*, "that the struggles in Central America are not simply indigenous revolts but rather are crucial battlegrounds in a broad East-West confrontation."

That effort also backfired. On March 12, the State Department held a press conference for Orlando José



DRAWINGS BY KIMBERLY BULCKEN ROOT

Robert Borosage is the director of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington. Peter Kornbluh is an I.P.S. fellow and the author of the forthcoming Nicaragua: The Price of Intervention, *from which this article is drawn.*

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Tardencillas, a Nicaraguan who had been captured by Salvadoran security forces and who, the Administration hoped, would present irrefutable evidence that the Sandinistas were exporting revolution. But instead of repeating what he had told his captors—that he had been trained in Cuba and Ethiopia and had been sent to command Salvadoran guerrillas—Tardencillas told the assembled reporters that he had been tortured and "forced to say many things about the connection between Nicaragua and El Salvador." In El Salvador, Tardencillas said, he had been offered a choice: "I could come here or face certain death." As State Department officials squirmed, Tardencillas added that he had "obviously been presented for purposes of propaganda."

Concern about the Administration's inability to build public support for its hard-line policies in Central America was expressed during an April 1982 meeting of the National Security Planning Group, which includes the Vice President, the Director of Central Intelligence, the President's national security adviser, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and top White House aides. An internal summary of the meeting noted, "We continue to have serious difficulties with U.S. public and Congressional opinion, which jeopardizes our ability to stay the course." To address "the public affairs dimension of the Central American problem," the group recommended that "under the auspices of the White House, the public information effort be augmented and targeted on improving communications with the Congress and with opinion leaders."

Subsequently the Administration has waged what National Security Council documents call a "public diplomacy" campaign to win the hearts and minds of the American people and manipulate the debate on U.S. involvement in Central America. The effort reflects the Hollywood style of the Reagan Presidency. The Great Communicator has given two nationally televised speeches on Central America, one to a rare joint session of Congress, on April 27, 1983, and one from his pulpit in the Oval Office a year later, in which he repeated the litany of official accusations against the Sandinistas. The creation of the Kissinger commission on Central America was another attempt to promote policy via a media spectacle. Supposedly formed to provide the President with bipartisan advice, the commission was, N.S.C. documents show, part of the Administration's "invigorated strategy" to "help build support for our long-term regional policy."

To market U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, the President has set up a veritable propaganda ministry in the executive branch. The Outreach Working Group on Central America, established in the spring of 1983 with the primary purpose of rallying domestic constituencies, operates out of the White House. Directed until recently by Faith Ryan Whittlesey, assistant public liaison for the President, the group has published a series of "White House Digests" which depict Nicaragua as a "terrorist" nation; it also hosts a forum every Wednesday for interested parties at the old Executive Office Building. The speakers addressing those meetings make up a Who's Who on the right. Arnaud de Borchgrave, co-author of *The Spike* and now editor of the Moonie newspaper *The Washington Times*, has vented his views there no less than three times. When Lynn Bouchey, formerly a flack for the Pinochet dictatorship and currently president of the Council for Inter-American Security, spoke there last December, bumper stickers made by his organization proclaiming, "I support the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters" were disseminated—although White House officials say that was done without authorization. Last April, the evangelists who filled the room to hear a panel discussion of religious persecution in Nicaragua called out "Amen!" after every anti-Sandinista pronouncement.

There is less of a circus atmosphere at the State Department's Office of Public Diplomacy on Latin America and the Caribbean, which participated in the effort, according to its director, Otto Reich, "to convince the American people of the correctness of our policy." Like the White House outreach group, the Office of Public Diplomacy publishes and distributes anti-Sandinista tracts. Titles include "Broken Promises: Sandinista Repression of Human Rights in Nicaragua," "Misconceptions About U.S. Policy Toward Nicaragua" and "The Contadora Process." The State Department office also serves as a distribution center for reports by such anticommunist groups as the Cuban American National Foundation and the Gulf and Caribbean Foundation.

This public relations bureaucracy played a major role ir the Administration's efforts to discredit Nicaragua's elections of last November 4. "Our handling of the Nicaragua elections issue," an October 30, 1984, N.S.C. background paper states, has "shifted opinion against the sham elections." According to the document, the State Department prepared a "public diplomacy guidance" on the elections for use by government officials and distributed a pamphlet titled "Resource Book: Sandinista Elections in Nicaragua" to selected journalists and members of Congress. The Administration also sought to manipulate media coverage of the elections by encouraging nongovernmental foreign policy experts "to make public statements, prepare articles, and appear on media programs, especially immediately prior to and following the November 4 elections, eg, the morning TV shows on November 5."

The N.S.C. background paper also shows that the Reagan Administration made a major effort to delegitimize the Nicaraguan elections in the eyes of the world. The N.S.C. document details "Plans to Provide the Facts to the International Community." These include requesting journalists in Europe and Latin America to "write editorials questioning the validity of the elections" and asking U.S. labor leaders to solicit critical statements from their international counterparts. The memorandum states:

> We will approach significant and knowledgeable national leaders, in and out of government, to encourage public statements condemning the Nicaraguan elections as they are now set up. Useful statements should come from government officials, political party leaders (including international parties, such as SI [Socialist International]...), intellectuals, church and labor leaders.

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Thus Washington has trained its guns on the citizens of its Western allies. "International opinion, particularly in Europe and Mexico, continues to work against our policies," the National Security Planning Group observed in April 1982. In a strategy paper dated July 6, 1983, the N.S.C. noted, "The need is to build domestic and bipartisan support; then to turn that support into international understanding and support for our objectives." A subsection of this document, titled "Action Plan," calls on the Secretary of State to:

> Increase communication/public diplomacy efforts in Western Europe, Mexico, and other Contadora countries to highlite [*sic*] U.S. support for democracy. . . .
>
> In Europe, systematically emphasize the military nature of Soviet/Cuban/Nicaraguan policies and actions.
>
> In Latin America, and with European Socialists, emphasize the Sandinista betrayal of the original anti-Somoza revolution. Undertake major effort to have Christian Democrats condemn Cuban/Nicaraguan intervention.

To convince allies that the United States supports a peaceful solution to the crisis but that Nicaragua, as President Reagan stated in April 1983, "has rejected our repeated peace efforts," the Administration has engaged in what might be called showcase diplomacy. Washington paid lip service to the Contadora peace process only because it was supported by major U.S. allies in Latin America and Europe. In practice, however, it has consistently subverted the Contadora process, most recently last September, after Nicaragua agreed to sign the treaty worked out by Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama. "We have trumped the latest Nicaraguan/Mexican efforts to rush signature of an unsatisfactory Contadora agreement," an internal N.S.C. assessment stated, adding that "the situation remains fluid and requires careful management."

While the State Department has gone through the motions of negotiating with the Sandinistas, Washington's terms for an agreement require the Nicaraguan government's virtual capitulation. Diplomacy's only role in U.S. policy is as a weapon in the war. The July 6, 1983, strategy paper, for example, directs George Shultz to "develop and monitor a comprehensive diplomatic strategy of Central America with specific attention to the isolation of Nicaragua."

Despite this highly popular President's use of his bully pulpit, the four-year propaganda war has failed to sway public opinion at home or abroad. While President Reagan dismisses the Nicaraguan elections as a "Soviet-style sham," European leaders of all political stripes view the Sandinistas as the duly elected government of Nicaragua. In the United States, as the Administration's rhetoric escalates, so does public opposition. A recent ABC/*Washington Post* poll showed that 70 percent of the respondents opposed the Administration's effort to overthrow the Sandinistas, and only 18 percent supported that effort. (And 59 percent knew that this is the President's goal.)

Nevertheless, the Administration's pitch has had an effect where it counts—in Congress. Although a majority of legislators object to aiding the *contras*, even liberal Democrats have come to believe that the Sandinistas are an affront to the United States and that they deserve some form of punishment. During the MIG scare, Senator Christopher Dodd lined up to voice his support for "taking out" Soviet aircraft if Nicaragua obtained them. Liberal Representative Michael Barnes, chair of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, stated recently, "I continue to struggle with trying to find a compromise that could achieve the ends the Administration wants to achieve while getting us out of this *contra* program." As Representative David Obey, chair of the Subcommittee on Foreign Relations, put it, "There is something to be said for keeping the Sandinistas under pressure or in doubt as to our intentions . . . but our involvement with the *contras* tends to make the gringos the point at issue, rather than the shortcomings of the Sandinistas."

Thus, the debate between Capitol Hill and the executive branch over aid to the *contras* threatens to turn into a squabble over means rather than ends. The Administration may lose the vote on aid to the *contras* but nonetheless gain Congressional sanction for continuing, indeed even intensifying, its economic and military pressure on the Sandinistas.

Already the Administration has stepped up its economic war. On January 30, Secretary of State Shultz personally intervened with the president of the Inter-American Development Bank to block a $58 million agricultural loan to Nicaragua. The Pentagon has announced that Universal Trek-85, the largest military maneuvers in the region to date, will be held in Honduras later this month. And efforts are being made to find alternative sources of aid to fund the *contras*. Even if Congress votes against further aid for C.I.A. operations, the war will not end.

This bodes ill not only for Nicaragua but for the rest of us. If the major casualties of the Reagan Administration's intervention are Nicaraguan civilians, the principal victims of its propaganda campaign are the citizens of the United

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States. Nicaragua now stands not only as a test of a strategy of low-level warfare abroad but as a test of the viability of the "big lie" technique at home. It remains to be seen whether Congress will pass the test. □

FOUR MORE YEARS OF SECRECY

Washington vs. The Right to Know

LOIS P. SHEINFELD

Freedoms of speech and press, the fundamental safeguards of accountability in government, are under concerted attack by the Reagan Administration. Using secrecy, censorship and sleek propaganda to protect itself from public scrutiny and criticism, the Administration has sought to achieve its goals without justifying them in debate. The record of the past four years tells us what we can expect in the next four.

Witness the way the Administration armed itself with the McCarran-Walter Act—passed over President Truman's veto in 1952, during the McCarthy paranoia—to ban controversial foreign speakers from visiting this country. The banned individuals have included Nobel Prize–winning authors, antinuclear advocates, politicians, human rights activists and scholars.

While carrying out this policy of information lockout, the government engaged in information lockup. For nearly three years, beginning in 1981, the United States Information Agency covertly compiled a "blacklist" containing the names of eighty to one hundred people, including Walter Cronkite, Coretta Scott King, James Baldwin and Ralph Nader, who were deemed unfit to represent America in an overseas speakers' program.

Administration efforts to blanket its own activities in secrecy have been staggering. William J. Casey curbed the Central Intelligence Agency's contacts with the media and the public as soon as he became director, in February 1981. Last year, in his widely quoted letter to Casey on the mining of Nicaraguan ports, Senator Barry Goldwater, former chair of the Intelligence Committee, asked, "Bill, how can we back [the President's] policy when we don't know what the hell he is doing?"

In January 1983, President Reagan issued his "up to my keister" directive, ordering White House aides to limit their contact with the press. Just two months later, the President sought to subject more than 100,000 government employees to a lifetime nondisclosure contract. The contract required the employees to submit to lie detector tests at the government's option. Early last year, responding to Congressional and public outrage, the President placed the directive on hold, "to remove it as a sore spot, a source of controversy" in an election year, according to one Administration official. The President has not disavowed or abandoned the directive.

Indeed, on June 13 the General Accounting Office disclosed that more than 120,000 employees had already signed a somewhat narrower lifetime censorship agreement, which was imposed in 1981 and remains in place. The Administration has even required that unclassified government-supported academic research be submitted to government censors before publication.

Federal employees and academic researchers have fared no worse than the Freedom of Information Act. By executive order, President Reagan changed the guidelines for the classification of information, so that almost anything can be labeled top-secret if the Administration doesn't wish to divulge it. Through changes in the F.O.I.A. guidelines on fees, the Justice Department made it possible for agencies to restrict the flow of information further by charging exorbitant sums for material, sometimes in advance of receipt. And the Administration lobbied intensively to persuade Congress to narrow the scope of the act when that could not be achieved by executive decree alone.

Art has also been affected. By labeling award-winning Canadian films on nuclear war and acid rain "political propaganda," the Administration tried to restrict their distribution and impact in the United States. Conversely, by arbitrarily refusing to certify award-winning U.S. films on toxic-waste disposal and on the My Lai massacre as educational, scientific or cultural—certifications which would have exempted them from foreign import duties—the Administration made their dissemination abroad prohibitively expensive.

Rudely "bookending" 1984 were the Justice Department's attempt in January to obtain a court injunction banning the publication of a judge's opinion that criticized the professional behavior of Justice Department lawyers, and the C.I.A.'s attempt in November to invoke the power of the Federal Communications Commission to punish a major television network because of a broadcast that criticized the agency's activity.

Perhaps more than any other Reagan action, the President's blackout of independent press coverage of the Grenada invasion—his exclusion of the press from the island, the creation of his own media (government reporters, photographers and cameramen) and the resulting misinformation, which prompted deputy press secretary Les Janka to resign—was a radical departure from this country's tradition. "The very purpose of the First Amendment," said Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, "is to foreclose public authority from assuming a guardianship of the public mind through regulating the press [and] speech. . . . In this field every person must be his own watchman for truth, because the forefathers did not trust any government to separate the true from the false for us."

What will the President's second term bring? Clearly, more of the same.

A wide-ranging censorship drive aimed at smothering the

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flow of information on issues of public concern has already begun. In December, a month after Reagan's re-election, the Administration clamped unprecedented secrecy restrictions on all future space shuttle missions. This appears to be the beginning of an effort to close off knowledgeable national debate on the President's militarization of the space program. There were no military secrets at stake in this Star Wars cover-up. Defense Department officials conceded that little about space shuttle missions can be concealed from Soviet electronic devices, high-powered telescopes and satellites. Only the American people are being kept in the dark.

Moreover, on February 12 it was reported that the Defense Department has proposed an increase of more than 50 percent in the secret portion of its weapons research and procurement budget, bringing the price tag for secret projects to $10 billion. (The same day, a Congressional caucus report accused the Administration of having supplied "insufficient, misleading and in some cases false information" on aid to El Salvador.)

Similarly scornful of government accountability is the Administration's latest ill-considered directive, expected to take effect in the fall, which would profoundly restrict Federal agencies from gathering and distributing statistics on the environment, the economy, health, housing and other matters essential to an informed citizenry. A spokeswoman for the American Library Association denounced the directive as the most extreme step the Administration has taken thus far "to limit public access to information."

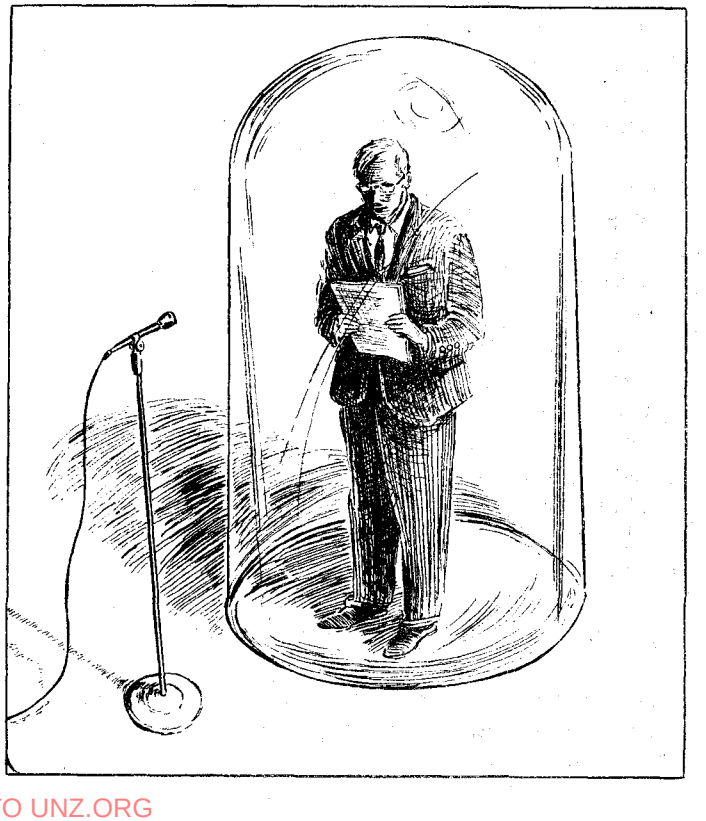
The machinery of criminal prosecution is also being abused in the service of censorship. In particular, the Administration's actions against Antoni Gronowicz and Samuel Loring Morison raise dangers of suppression that are not confined by the facts of those two cases. Gronowicz, the author of *God's Broker*, a biography of Pope John Paul II, is the focus of a grand jury investigation initiated by the Justice Department, which subpoenaed his notes and papers on the theory that supposedly false statements in the book and in Gronowicz's promotion of it may constitute mail fraud. No author is safe from the heavy hand of the government monitor when prosecutors and grand juries are so lightly cast in the role of reviewers of the accuracy of books.

Morison is being prosecuted for a violation of the Espionage Act because he gave a British publication three U.S. satellite photographs of a Soviet aircraft carrier. The case is a sorry attempt to circumvent Congress, which has repeatedly refused to pass an official secrets act. The Justice Department's contention that Morison is guilty of espionage even if his motive was "to expose obvious wrongdoing in high official circles" dramatically reveals the Administration's intent. It is using the Morison case to establish the dangerous precedent that the severe criminal sanctions of the Espionage Act (Morison faces forty years in prison) may be imposed to punish those who make embarrassing disclosures to the media. The Nixon Administration tried that tactic when it prosecuted Daniel Ellsberg for giving the Pentagon papers to *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. The action was dismissed because of government misconduct.

But prosecutions under the Espionage Act are not enough for this Administration. On March 20 *The Times* revealed that the C.I.A. had sent the White House a proposal, marked "secret," for specific legislation that would make it a crime for government employees to disclose classified information. (When George Lauder, the C.I.A.'s chief spokesman, was asked whether the disclosure of the agency's "secret" proposal would constitute a crime, he said: "We are not going to talk about it. There is no reason we have to make a comment about anything.") On March 27 the Administration rejected the C.I.A.'s request to slip the secrets act into the Intelligence Authorization bill, but left the door wide open for future, less "obscure" legislation.

Furthermore, we can expect the Administration to intensify its attacks on the press in order to guarantee its control over the flow of information. Last December, the director of the White House Office of Science and Technology charged that "much of the press seems to be drawn from a relatively narrow fringe element on the far left of our society"; Reagan officials threatened the news media with a Defense Department investigation if they even "speculated" on the details of the space shuttle flight scheduled for January 23; and when *The Washington Post* published an analysis based on information in the public record, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger vehemently accused the newspaper of endangering national security and giving aid and comfort to the enemy.

In an analogous case, Lieut. Gen. John T. Chain Jr., director of the State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, ordered his staff not to talk to Leslie Gelb, national security correspondent of *The New York Times*. Gelb had



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written an article—based on information that had already appeared in the foreign press—that revealed U.S. contingency plans to deploy nuclear depth charges in the territory of eight allied countries, which had not been consulted about the plan. According to Chain, the piece contained "classified information the release of which is harmful and damaging to the United States" and which served "to aid our potential adversary." Although acknowledging that the information Gelb reported had been disclosed previously in the foreign press, Secretary of State George Shultz said that the article had caused "a considerable amount of damage" to U.S. interests.

Vilification of the press as untrustworthy and unpatriotic was also a favorite device of the Nixon Administration. The words of the Reagan regime echo the accusations leveled against *The Times* and *The Post* when they published the Pentagon papers. Reagan's recent appointment of Patrick J. Buchanan, Richard Nixon's antimedia speechwriter, to oversee White House communications plainly suggests there will be continued pernicious attacks on the messenger whenever the message is disagreeable.

President Reagan's efforts to keep us from knowing the facts essential for intelligent decision-making have consistently thwarted the public's capacity to hold the Administration responsible for its actions. The courts and Congress must resist these censorship efforts. Democracy depends on it. But they cannot do it alone. "Liberty," said Judge Learned Hand, "lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it." The responsibility for keeping liberty alive by refusing to accept concealment and suppression rests with each of us. □

'WERE THE ROSENBERGS FRAMED?'

This historic debate, which was sponsored by The Nation and The New Republic at New York City's Town Hall on October 20, 1983, has been described as "a political-literary brawl" (Los Angeles Times), at which "a cheering, jeering crowd of 1,500 followed every jab in a fight over history" (The Washington Post).

The main participants in the debate were: Walter Schneir and Miriam Schneir, authors, Invitation to an Inquest; Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, authors, and Sol Stern, research assistant, The Rosenberg File: A Search for the Truth; and Elizabeth Holtzman, moderator. There were also questions and comments from Michael Meeropol, Morton Sobell, Marshall Perlin, James Weinstein, Victor Navasky and others.

A complete record of this extraordinary event can now be purchased in transcript or cassette. Transcripts are available for $24 each; cassettes are $19 each. There are special discounts on orders of five or more. Send check or money order, payable to The Nation, to: "Rosenbergs," The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011 (a project of The Nation Institute).

HATCH ACT PROSECUTION

No Free Speech For Federal Unions

KEITH A. SINZINGER

The Reagan Administration's assault on the rights of government workers has a new target: political expression by their union officials. On February 26, the presidents of the three largest Federal employees' unions were charged with violating the Hatch Act, the 1939 law restricting political activity by Civil Servants. Kenneth Blaylock of the American Federation of Government Employees (A.F.G.E.), Morris (Moe) Biller of the American Postal Workers Union (A.P.W.U.) and Vincent Sombrotto of the National Association of Letter Carriers (N.A.L.C.) were accused of campaigning for Walter Mondale and against Ronald Reagan—specifically, of writing partisan articles in their union publications.

The charges were made by the Office of Special Counsel (O.S.C.), the tiny independent agency that enforces the Hatch Act. Labor leaders and their supporters on Capitol Hill have decried this unprecedented attempt to punish the union leaders for criticizing Administration policies that affect the Civil Service. This use of the act, they say, stretches it far beyond the intent of its framers. The O.S.C. denies that the case is antiunion or politically motivated.

Congress approved the Hatch Act (formally known as An Act to Prevent Pernicious Political Activities) forty-six years ago to prevent President Franklin Roosevelt from transforming New Deal agencies into a political machine. Passed mainly to prevent high-level government employees from using their authority for political purposes, the law also prohibits most Federal workers from running for partisan office, taking an "active part" in campaigns and soliciting political donations. Although it has been largely successful in protecting career Civil Service employees from shakedowns on the job, it has also severely limited their right to speak and act on political issues. The law expressly permits employees to voice political opinions, however, and it does not apply to unions. Penalties range from a thirty-day unpaid suspension to firing.

Ever since the O.S.C. was created, in 1979, partly to take over Hatch Act enforcement from the now defunct U.S. Civil Service Commission, prosecutions have been relatively rare—thirty-three in all. Most of the cases involved direct political activity, such as running for office or working for a

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campaign organization. In the case of Blaylock, Biller and Sombrotto, however, the alleged wrongdoing involves only political speech. To date, supporting evidence consists entirely of clippings from their union publications. Whether the three may be considered Federal employees under the act is a matter of legal dispute. As is common among government workers who have full-time union jobs, all three are on unpaid leave (the latest, since 1970), and thus are not in a position to coerce their co-workers. Although they remain on the job rolls and continue to accumulate future retirement benefits, they receive no salaries or pension contributions from the government.

The O.S.C.'s handling of the case is unusual in another way. In recent years it has sent letters of warning before filing charges, and special counsel K. William O'Connor, a Reagan appointee, has repeatedly said he favors this "prophylactic" approach to avoid expensive prosecutions. Nevertheless, the three union leaders received only brief letters summarizing the allegations against them and offering them the "opportunity" to avoid formal charges by resigning or retiring within two weeks.

The letters went out on February 11, but according to O.S.C. files the investigation was opened sixteen months earlier, one week after A.F.L.-C.I.O. convention delegates endorsed Walter Mondale for President at their biennial meeting in Hollywood, Florida. The big three Federal worker affiliates, which represent about 1.3 million employees, joined the endorsement based on earlier polls of their rank and file. Sombrotto, a member of the federation's executive council, spoke in support of Mondale at the convention. Blaylock, also a council member and head of the federation's Public Employee Department, later called Mondale "the person we believe can best lead the country."

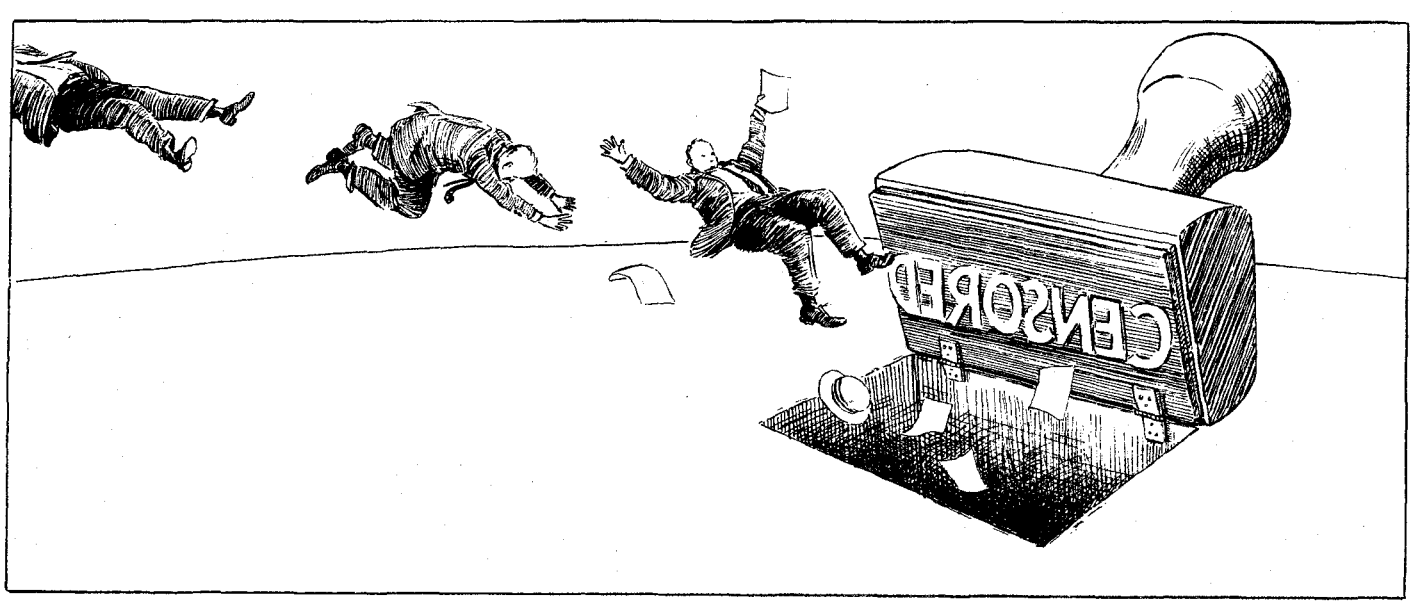
There is no evidence that those actions prompted the investigation. Just who or what did prompt it remains unclear, since the O.S.C. will not say who first raised a complaint about the three men. A representative for the special counsel denies that the White House played any role in the decision to bring the case. However, officials at the U.S. Postal Service have acknowledged that they supplied A.P.W.U. publications to the special counsel and then met with an investigator last April, just before entering into tense collective bargaining with the union.

The investigation became public last August when attorneys for the postal workers, preparing for another Hatch Act case, discovered that Biller was under scrutiny. Biller called a press conference, said the union would not be "muzzled or intimidated" and reaffirmed his support for Mondale. Shortly after that, the O.S.C. revealed that Blaylock and Sombrotto were also under investigation. O'Connor insisted he was interested in them only as Federal employees, not as union officials, and he characterized the probe as a "back burner" affair.

But when he filed formal charges with the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, the chief administrative court in Federal personnel cases, O'Connor asked that the case be expedited because of the "importance of the issues"—particularly the question of whether the Hatch Act applied to union officials. The panel's three members, all Reagan appointees, denied O'Connor's request without explanation.

Political endorsements by Federal employees' unions and their leaders are not new. PATCO, the ill-fated air traffic controllers' union, strongly backed Reagan in 1980, while most other unions representing Federal workers grudgingly supported Jimmy Carter. Political action committees affiliated with the three unions involved in the O.S.C.'s case contributed nearly $3 million to political campaigns in 1983 and 1984. (Secondary Hatch Act charges have been brought against Biller and Sombrotto for soliciting contributions to defeat Reagan. Neither union's fund contributed to the Mondale campaign.)

The main charge against the three labor officials—their criticism of Reagan in union publications—has serious First Amendment implications. To A.F.G.E. members who are executive branch employees, the White House incumbent is their ultimate boss. They have no right to strike or to



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bargain on economic issues, so they are uniquely affected by political decisions. The semi-independent postal corporation, which allows bargaining on wages and certain benefits, is governed by a board of Presidential appointees. Given these strictures, union officials who cannot speak freely on political issues cannot serve their members. "If elected leaders can't speak for the union, the union is mute," says Biller.

In addition, the Hatch Act charges directly challenge the right of union officeholders to express their political opinions. Most of the articles cited in the charges against the three leaders are signed or clearly labeled "point of view," "opinion" or "editorial." The leaders even showed sensitivity to Hatch Act restrictions. They skirted outright endorsements in favor of generalities ("changing the tenant in the White House"), rhetorical questions ("In whose pocket is Ronald Reagan?") and appeals to class interests ("If the working people of this country are truly to 'recapture' the land, then we will have to do so at the ballot box").

Although the three labor officials obviously supported Mondale, and although Biller and Sombrotto encouraged their members to make PAC contributions, their activity hardly constituted political campaigning. Twelve of the twenty-three clippings came from 1983 publications; President Reagan did not announce his candidacy until 1984. Two of them are photographs of the union presidents shaking hands with Mondale. Other articles discuss the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s endorsement of Mondale and the Administration's record on workplace issues. (Tertiary charges concern Sombrotto's alleged support of Washington Representative Mike Lowry's Senate campaign in 1983 and Biller's complimentary statements about Geraldine Ferraro's nomination for Vice President.)

The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Hatch Act in 1947 and 1973. In those cases, the majorities ruled that the law was necessary for administrative efficiency and for a system of promotions based on merit; the dissenters called the law excessively vague and broad. The Court has never ruled on the Hatch Act as applied to union officials, and no one has explained what public policy is served by muzzling top labor leaders. "We don't see the government's compelling interest in prosecuting someone who's on extended leave," says A.F.G.E. general counsel Mark Roth. "This case was made to order for going all the way up." In two previous cases in which the O.S.C. alleged illegal political speech, local union officials settled for suspensions rather than contest the charges.

In practical terms, a successful prosecution of Blaylock, Biller and Sombrotto would not affect their union status and would have little effect on their personal lives. Their pensions could be reduced slightly, and because they are eligible for retirement anyway, the loss of their Federal jobs would mainly deprive them of a psychological link to the rank and file. Although all would be able to collect their pensions, they have vowed to fight the case rather than retire. Others in the future may not have that option. As Biller notes, hundreds of full-time local union officials on extended leave from the Federal government will be affected by the case's outcome. The decision could also have consequences for union officials in states and municipalities covered by "little Hatch Acts."

Some unionists find the O.S.C.'s prosecution especially offensive because of the unprecedented political activity last year by certain "un-Hatched" Presidential appointees, notably Office of Personnel Management director Donald Devine and twenty-two ambassadors, who endorsed Senator Jesse Helms's re-election bid. Their action was not illegal, but it violated a tradition by which officials in these positions have avoided campaign involvement.

Union officials also perceive the Hatch Act charges as part of an Administration broadside against Civil Service employees. Proposals to cut pay and benefits, impose censorship and polygraph tests and limit union bargaining rights have kept Federal workers on the defensive. The destruction of PATCO after its 1981 strike remains a bitter memory, and the Administration has used the courts to limit employees' First Amendment rights and remedies.

One certain result of this dispute over the Hatch Act will be increased scrutiny of the law and the O.S.C. on Capitol Hill. In 1976 Congress voted to amend the act, expanding the range of voluntary political participation for employees while retaining safeguards against coercion. President Ford vetoed the measure, however, and despite strong labor backing, supporters could not override him. Bills currently in the House and Senate aim to increase employee rights or limit campaign activity by Presidential appointees, but the chances for Hatch Act reforms this year may depend on the outcome of the case.

Changes at the O.S.C. seem more likely, partly because of suspicion on Capitol Hill that the office has become partisan but mainly because it has failed to perform one of its chief duties: protecting whistleblowers. In six years, the O.S.C. has successfully prosecuted in only two incidents involving workers who were punished for speaking out about their superiors' misconduct. In each case, the errant official received a demotion, but only after the whistleblower had taken a different job. Indeed, O'Connor has warned employees not to report fraud or other abuses. The merit board has set such stringent standards of proof in such cases that it is almost impossible to prove retaliation. A recent survey taken by the board showed a dramatic rise in the number of employees who say they would not report wrongdoing because they feared reprisals.

Representative Patricia Schroeder, one of the legislative architects of the O.S.C., is dissatisfied with its performance and is expected to introduce a bill later this spring which will call either for reforms or for the abolition of the agency, depending on the findings of a General Accounting Office investigation of O.S.C. operations. She has called the prosecution of the three union leaders silly.

Even if Blaylock, Biller and Sombrotto win, the case will drain their unions' treasuries. Under current policy, the O.S.C. is not obligated to pay defendants' legal fees when it loses a Hatch Act case. Says A.F.G.E. attorney Roth, "They're going for a pound of flesh right now." □

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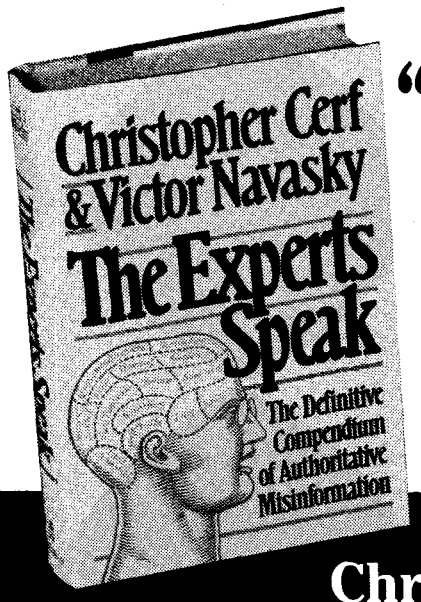

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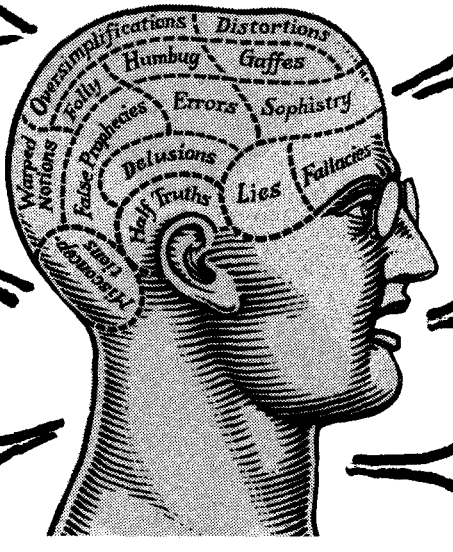

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CHILE UNDER SIEGE

The Opposition Is Off Balance

CYNTHIA BROWN

As if currency devaluations and a state of siege were not enough, the Chilean people were hit by an earthquake on March 3. Measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale, it shook Santiago, Valparaíso and adjacent areas, killing 146 people and leaving some 200,000 homeless. The aftershocks continued for days, causing widespread panic. With damage estimated at up to $600 million, the 2 percent of the national budget that Gen. Augusto Pinochet allotted for the emergency is far from sufficient. The government did not mobilize a civilian network of assistance as it had in the past, or send representatives to the affected areas. By the end of March, many Chileans, living in makeshift tents, drinking scarce and unclean water, had received no government help at all.

The earthquake had political aftershocks as well. The limited protests the opposition planned for March 27 had little impact, as people's thoughts turned on survival. For Pinochet, the disaster offered an opportunity to call for national unity, hand out construction contracts to his allies and promise emergency aid to the poor.

Pinochet was doing well even before the earthquake. The state of siege he imposed last November 6, and renewed for another three months on February 2, has muzzled the opposition. In early February he rid himself of Interior and Finance ministers who, by the standards of the regime, passed for reformers. And when U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Langhorne Motley visited Chile in late February, he let it be known that the United States could work with Pinochet. During the past two years of antigovernment demonstrations, the Administration had at least acknowledged the opposition's demands for change; now, Motley told the press, "stability" was the principal U.S. concern. According to sources in the Christian Democratic Party, Motley counseled party leaders to "live with" the Constitution of 1980, a document designed by the regime to maintain Pinochet in the presidency until at least 1989. The Constitution's "transition to democracy," which provides for limited elections in 1989 but insures military control of the government until at least 1997—and permanently excludes the Marxist left from political participation—has been denounced by Chile's centrist opposition, as well as by the left. Yet as he left Chile on February 20, Motley said, "My impression is [that] this destiny of Chile, in Chilean hands, is in good hands."

Change in Chile has never appealed to the Reagan Administration. After the monthly mass protests began in May 1983, the State Department had relatively little to say about the regime's repressive policies: the political murders, the nocturnal military occupations of poor neighborhoods, the exiling or internal banishment of labor and political leaders, the routine use of torture. The department's concern has remained selective. In 1983, the arrest of Christian Democratic president Gabriel Valdes brought remonstrances from Washington; in 1984 the jailing of Socialist Party leader Manuel Almeyda did not. Stressing that, under its Constitution, Chile is now in "transition to democracy," the Administration has called on Chileans to open a "dialogue" with the regime on speeding up the transition—without necessarily altering its many restrictions on Pinochet's role as President. The trouble with this approach is that it ignores the failure of such an attempt in 1983, the escalation of repression the following year, the opposition's refusal to bargain under the rules of the 1980 Constitution and Pinochet's refusal even to consider stepping down.

This Administration has also consistently backed Chile's requests to international lending institutions, voting in favor of nearly $1.5 billion in loans since 1981. Last year it arranged for the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation to extend $272 million worth of investment insurance to Chile. Last September the United States was the only Western democracy to send its ambassador to Pinochet's political anniversary celebrations, and last December it was the only Western democracy to oppose the U.N. General Assembly's annual resolution condemning the regime's abuse of human rights. If it weren't for Congressional opposition, the Administration long ago would have renewed bilateral economic and military aid to Chile, which has been blocked by human rights legislation since 1976.

On the other hand, the White House recognizes the need to deal with Chile's movement for change. To promote talks between moderates and the regime, the State Department has tried to maintain its credibility with Chilean centrists, mainly by sending U.S. officials to the country to make pro-democratic statements and meet with representatives of a narrow segment of the opposition. The United States justified its support for the regime in 1983 by explaining that it was backing the efforts at dialogue initiated by Sergio Jarpa, then the Interior Minister, whom the State Department disingenuously called a moderate. The 1983 talks quickly failed when it became clear that Pinochet would not consider any concessions, but the State Department has continued to press for their renewal. In the highly charged Chilean context those small gestures seemed to be a show of support for democratic rule. And the State Department was content to appear open-minded as long as the opposition was gaining strength and demanding attention. Now, however, the balance has shifted.

The protests that had been building during the second half of 1984 culminated in the surprisingly effective general strike of October 30. But the state of siege broke the opposition's stride. Under conditions of total censorship, more than 28,000 people were arrested in the first month. By incarcerating some 400 people in a concentration camp at Pisagua in the northern desert, Pinochet revived the wartime atmosphere that prevailed following the overthrow of Presi-

Cynthia Brown writes often on Latin America for The Nation.

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dent Salvador Allende. The government's tactics were psychologically astute: the most severe repression was directed at the left; soldiers in full camouflage gear terrorized a Santiago slum by parachuting from helicopters; the air force, which reportedly opposed the state of siege order, was forced to dirty its hands by participating in mass arrests and other abuses.

The ferocity of the assault caused some in the opposition to become hesitant. In December prominent centrist labor leader Rodolfo Seguel spoke privately of waiting until the state of siege was lifted before resuming mass demonstrations. Without full labor and centrist support, the leftist-led protests of November 27 and 28, though courageous, were small and scattered.

The increased pressure also exposed the opposition's major weakness—its lack of a common agenda. One sign of the strain was the collapse of an initiative to gather support for a "constitutional pact," a statement of principles on which to base a future government of Chile. Sponsors of the *pacto* hoped it would encourage long-term tactical cooperation between the two major opposition fronts, the Democratic Alliance (A.D.), led by the Christian Democratic Party, and the Democratic Popular Movement (M.D.P.), led by the Communist Party and a segment of the Socialist Party. When the project fizzled, each coalition blamed the other, but the episode revealed a basic lack of direction.

Essentially, the opposition has two options. One is a center-right alliance which would negotiate with the government about holding elections before 1989, under the existing Constitution and with the exclusion of the Marxist parties. The other is a center-left coalition which would hold out for a pluralistic and fully democratic constitutional order, meanwhile engaging in mass protests and strikes to render the country ungovernable. The latter strategy was gaining ground until the state of siege was declared. However, the left, under fire for so long, has been unable to maintain a united agenda. The Socialists are fragmented into more than a dozen groups; the social democratic Radical Party is split; and the Socialist Bloc, composed of relatively small but intellectually influential parties, is divided about how to deal with the two major fronts. The Communist Party, the largest united party on the left and long a major force in Chilean politics, is also distracted by internal debate. Some of its young members reportedly favor violent actions like the sabotage being carried out by the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front, while the party leadership calls for peaceful demonstrations and coalition building. And the Revolutionary Left Movement (M.I.R.), a small armed-struggle party, remains alienated from much of the left. Clearly the political center has the leverage; thus the Christian Democratic Party, which is traditionally the party with the greatest voting strength, is trying to decide whom to choose as allies. Although Christian Democratic leader Valdes spoke bitterly of the M.D.P. in a December interview, he seems unwilling to enter into a marriage with the civilian far right. And the A.D. told Motley in February that it was not interested in a dialogue based on the 1980 Constitution.

The State Department's response to all this has been to

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bolster the regime with the specious argument that Pinochet faces a "terrorist" threat and that the state of siege is therefore justified. On January 24, in a private meeting with a group of Congressmen, including House Foreign Affairs subcommittee chair Michael Barnes, Motley argued that to promote Chilean democracy, Congress should suspend legislation that ties military sales to improvement in Chile's human rights record, so that some safety equipment could be bought by the air force. According to Congressional sources, Motley also asked that Congress modify the principal human rights law barring military and economic aid to Chile.

The Administration has backed up this pitch with apocalyptic rhetoric. President Reagan has spoken of the potential "Nicaraguanization" of Chile. Shortly before a Congressional delegation led by Representative Peter Kostmayer left for Santiago in January, it received a State Department briefing paper alleging that Chile's two important labor federations were under the "indirect control" of the Communist Party. (Actually, both unions permit considerable internal democracy, and their top officials are Christian Democrats.) Once in Chile, the delegation discovered that the U.S. Embassy had ignored its request for a meeting with the Socialist Bloc and considered its request to meet with the M.D.P. unacceptable. Members of the delegation say that the embassy even regarded the A.D. with suspicion and was particularly hostile toward Valdes. Against this backdrop, the Administration's well-publicized signals of distress at the state of siege amount to little. Two abstaining votes on Chile's loan requests before the Inter-American Development Bank in early February and the World Bank in early March did not stop the loans from being approved. The Administration did not go so far as to comply with U.S. human rights law, which requires a no vote. While in Chile, Motley reportedly discounted the significance of the first vote, calling it a sop to Congress.

Motley also threw a bone to the moderate opposition. According to one member of the military junta, the regime's leaders promised Motley they would promulgate the long-discussed law on political parties later this year. If true—Pinochet has not confirmed it—this news implies a willingness by the government to lift the state of siege and legalize non-Marxist parties relatively soon. Nothing could more effectively rupture the already weakened ties between center and left.

It is unclear whether Pinochet would adopt such a sophisticated course. His usual style is more blunt. In January, a new prison camp opened in Chonchi, near the northeastern border with Bolivia and Argentina. In February, Chilean consulates received a list of more than 4,500 persons who are permanently banned from returning to their homeland. A teachers' union leader and a human rights worker were abducted and murdered at the end of March. There have been several disappearances since September, lately carried out by armed civilians, reminiscent of Central American death squads.

Labor and political leaders freely acknowledge that the protests so far have not seriously shaken Pinochet. Absent concerted opposition, the general has no reason to step aside before 1989, when his term expires. For those who are impatient, a Chilean journalist reports that the State Department has some advice. "Look at it this way," director of Southern Cone Affairs Robert Morley told the journalist recently, "it's only fifty months." □

Country of Exiles

(Continued From Front Cover)

weeks in hiding, he risked coming home. A half-hour after he returned, just as he was coming out of the shower, a gang of policemen burst into his house and carried him off to the National Stadium, where thousands of others were being held. Like most of them, he was tortured for days and then shipped to Chacabuco, a concentration camp in the northern desert, first in the stinking hold of a ship, then by train. He was freed nine months later. Charges were never pressed against him. When they picked him up eleven years later, he recalled with astonishment that he had arrived in Chacabuco on November 7, 1973.

This time, however, Alvarado was not tortured. His face was hooded and he was insulted by his guards, but as soon as he arrived in the cellars of the National Information Center, Pinochet's secret-police agency (formerly DINA), he noticed a hesitancy on the part of his captors. This did not allay his fears; he knew that in this same place people had spent infernal months of horror, only to disappear forever or have their bodies dumped, mutilated, in some river or on some street. But the interrogation was courteous, almost conversational. This, he thought, might be a tactic to put him off balance. But five days later, when he was placed on a bus heading south, he knew he would not end up in a concentration camp. He was about to become a *relegado*, an internal exile. He was not told his destination; finally he arrived at the small fishing village of Chonchi, on the island of Chiloé, 800 miles south of Santiago.

Alvarado's banishment was part of an offensive that General Pinochet had been threatening for months. The previous year, pressured by a mounting opposition movement and besieged by an economic crisis which had alienated vast sectors of hitherto loyal middle-class supporters, he had been forced to grant some concessions. Opposition magazines circulated, full of stories about the regime's corruption and its human rights abuses, and democratic parties surfaced. Elections were held in several trade unions, professional organizations and student associations, all of them won by candidates representing forces that demanded that the government resign. The police seemed unable to dislodge groups of homeless migrants from the countryside who had taken over some of the city's vacant lots. People were being beaten up, shantytowns raided, hundreds of

Ariel Dorfman, the author of The Empire's Old Clothes *(Pantheon), is working on the theatrical version of his novel* Widows *for the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.*

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slum dwellers shot by police on days when protests and strikes were scheduled. Democratic leaders were harassed, waylaid on streets, threatened. Even though factions of the opposition movement could not agree on a common strategy, they managed to organize a general strike, on October 30, which paralyzed the country.

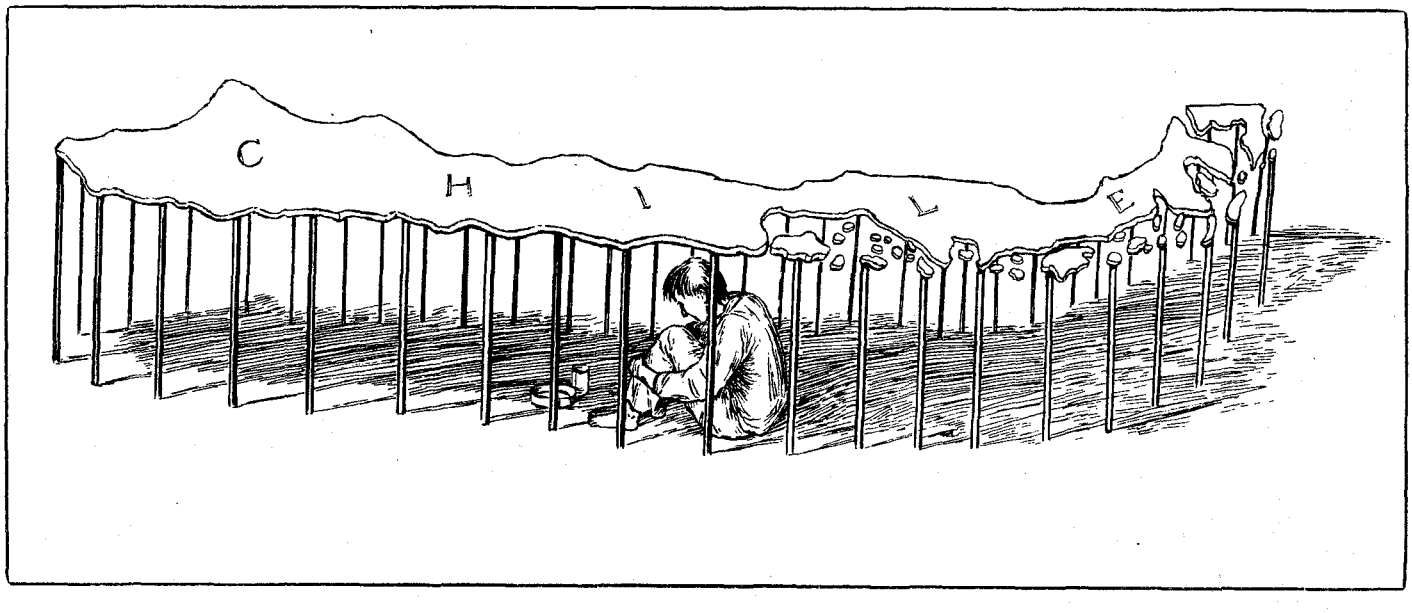
The situation was getting out of hand. There was an alarming rise in bombings—some undoubtedly perpetrated by groups associated with the Communist Party but a larger number carried out by police provocateurs seeking to create a sense of chaos which would frighten the middle class and pave the way for a crackdown. For some time, Pinochet had been warning his adversaries that there would be a "second September 11." His invocation of the coup that brought him to power was an admission that he had not solved the country's basic problems and could offer only another bloodbath.

There has been no bloodbath—at least not yet. After Pinochet proclaimed the state of siege, on November 6, his brutality consisted of selective blows that left the opposition gasping for air. It was a toned-down reiteration of the violence of eleven years before. Instead of widespread torture, massive executions and bombings, and hundreds of disappearances, there were a few deaths, short-term abductions, frequent beatings and periodic raids. Instead of killing journalists, Pinochet issued a decree shutting down magazines. Instead of arresting the most visible leaders of the parties, those who had contacts abroad, the authorities concentrated on their seconds-in-command, cutting off the leaders from the people. Why use the enormous National Stadium when a smaller one was just as good? Chileans remember the September coup so vividly that the government could evoke a Pavlovian response with a few dramatic gestures, terrorizing and demobilizing a majority of the people. (The brutal murder of three prominent opposition figures shortly before this article went to press indicates that the gestures may get more dramatic, and dangerous, in the days to come.)

"This is going to be a Polish solution," a high-level official confided to a group of reporters, without a hint of irony in his voice. "A lot of control and not much spectacle. Nothing for foreign TV news to cover." Such a solution had the added benefit of appeasing the forces that viewed the state of siege as excessive and whose support Pinochet needed to remain in power: the U.S. government, which had been pressing for a dialogue between the military and center-right members of the opposition, and elements in the army and the ruling elite who hoped to enlist the cooperation of the opposition Christian Democrats in a gradual transition to a limited democracy which would outlaw the Marxists and their allies. More violence also would have brought the already tense relations with the Catholic Church to the breaking point.

Internal exile is a pillar of this strategy. It has immense advantages for the dictatorship. It disrupts and neutralizes the dissident movement by sending some of its most militant members to faraway places, where they lose contact with what is going on. The whole country becomes a prison, and it costs the state nothing. The government does not need to put the offenders on trial; it does not need to open new jails or overcrowd already filled penitentiaries. It does not even need to feed the exiles, who must work to support their families and themselves. The secret detention centers are kept conveniently transitory, way stations where people can be quickly "treated" before being dispatched elsewhere. Nor are the effects on the permanent inhabitants of those remote places to be overlooked: there, for all to see, is proof of the government's omnipotence. Plus the side effects: *relegados* lose their jobs; if they are students, their careers are ruined.

To the Chilean military, *relegación* represents a superb use of the local terrain. Around forty years ago the writer Benjamín Subercaseaux called Chile's geography *loca* ("crazy"). Now that very craziness is being used by quite sane rulers to fragment and isolate their subjects. The country is almost 3,000 miles long and at no point more than 220 miles wide, with great extremes in climate, from desert to arctic, a Mediterranean-like central region and an Oregon-



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like southern forest and lake district. What has been the delight of poets, nature lovers, adventurers, geologists and geographers is also, unfortunately, made to order for General Pinochet.

I heard about the *relegados* in Maryland, where I have lived for the past four and a half years of my exile. I was planning a two-month visit to Chile (my second homecoming, actually; I had been allowed back in September 1983). This time, I would spend my first Christmas and New Year's in twelve years with my family and friends, and explore the work I might do when I return there permanently at the end of the year, if nothing interferes.

During my exile several of my friends had been sent to remote latitudes as punishment, and I had felt the impotence of being far from the country and far from them, far from even the possibility of visiting them, of defeating the dictatorship by crossing those miles and giving the person a hug and a book, a few day's presence and smiles and messages. The pain of exile is hearing the ordinary and extraordinary things that other people have been doing and wondering if you will ever be able to do them yourself.

One thing I could now undertake was a visit to an internal exile. Lucho Alvarado and I had been close friends at the university in the early 1960s; we had shared concerts, dances, hikes. Young Chileans then also shared something else: the political rebellion that was shaking our student world. In subsequent years, we would be chased by cops in street demonstrations, fired on by thugs trying to scare us out of the slums when we campaigned for Allende in 1964. We invited Pablo Neruda to the student union to read poetry. We even set up an education service for the poor, which we pompously called the University of the People. A group of college students worked the misery belt of Santiago, teaching history, biology, literature and, Alvarado's specialty, geography. After we graduated, we saw less of each other, though in the last months of the Allende government I saw him several times at the presidential palace. Our last meeting took place the day before the coup; we said goodbye as if we would see each other the next day. Later I heard that he had been arrested, and in 1974, when I was campaigning in Europe for the release of Chilean political prisoners, I thought of him often. After hearing he had been freed, I lost track of him. Exile is like that: the space where you used to meet people, where you all crossed and converged, has been taken from you. On my trip I would renew our friendship and fill in the missing years.

Alvarado, however, was not the only person on my list. A few days after I learned of his removal to Chiloé, I heard that Fanny Pollarolo, a psychiatrist who worked with people the regime had tortured and who had become the spokeswoman for the Communist-led Popular Democratic Movement, had been exiled to the village of Maullín. Although she was not a friend from way back like Alvarado, I had established a working relationship with her and her colleagues. I was planning a book on the mental sickness of Chile—the nation's mind is as insane as its geography—and on therapy for the repressed. She was now experiencing, for the first time in her life, the direct effects of the repression she had spent the last decade studying and attempting to alleviate. She had comforted so many victims that it would be nice to be able to bring her some consolation.

Before I left for Chile, I was unable to discover if my trip had any chance of success. The people at the other end of the line spoke haltingly, with great caution. You could sense the shadows behind every word. Perhaps the police were stopping visitors, interrogating or jailing them. Perhaps they were punishing *relegados* who were visited by outsiders. My wife, Angélica, wanted to come along. She had known Alvarado longer than I had, having worked with him in the winter of 1960 in the reconstruction of a town devastated by an earthquake. But if she accompanied me, we would want to take our 5-year-old boy, Joaquín, along too, and I feared for his safety.

When we reached Santiago just before Christmas, the trip south did not seem so dangerous. Scores of *relegados*, my friends among them, had been visited by many people, from inside Chile and from abroad. At the office of a human rights group in Santiago, employees handed out maps, showing where the exiles lived. "Everybody is going on what we call solidarity vacations," a human rights worker told me. "You adopt a *relegado* and go and see him. And you can also see how Pinochet's strategy isn't working. Instead of being scared, the internal exiles have revolutionized every place they've gone to, agitating like mad."

Unfortunately, the government was well aware of what was going on. A few days before we left for the south, in mid-January, I learned that Alvarado and two other internal exiles had been forcibly relocated. According to the story I heard, the three had been awakened by a policeman, who had ordered them to report to the hospital for a medical examination. When they went outside a jeep filled with agents was waiting for them. Without being permitted to gather their belongings or even speak to their families—who were by then living with them—they were packed into the vehicle and taken to a smaller, more inaccessible village called Achao, located on the tip of an island off the coast of Chiloé. Chonchi had been remote, but it could at least be reached by ferry and then by car over a decent road, and it had many telephones. To get to Achao from the main island meant taking another ferry, and then driving sixty miles on rough dirt roads. The town has only one telephone, under tight control.

The dictatorship was beginning to teach me a lesson. One has, in countries like mine, limited control over one's future. A tyrant has power over your time; it belongs to him because he commands the space in which you move. He has created an atmosphere and a set of rules, and then he breaks those rules, forcing you to change your plans and tactics, and making everything you do so complicated and costly that resistance becomes very difficult. I was to find this out all too soon. □

Continued next week.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Sacred and Secular

BERNARD AVISHAI

EXODUS AND REVOLUTION. *By Michael Walzer. Basic Books. 177 pp. $15.95.*

According to Michael Walzer, the book of Exodus is our first recorded revolution. Perceptions of its course have influenced the way various Western religious and political movements have regarded deliverance from suffering and oppression. The example of Moses meant much to Thomas Aquinas, Judah Halevi and John Knox. Flight from Egypt inspired the Zionist Theodor Herzl, such defenders of Lenin as Lincoln Steffens and, in our day, the liberation theologians of Latin America. To get the meaning of the Exodus story just right, Walzer implies, is an important task; it could even save a life. He continues:

> I don't mean to disparage the sacred, only to explore the secular: my subject is not what God has done but what men and women have done, first with the biblical text itself and then in the world, with the text in their hands.

Interpreting Exodus is no academic exercise for Walzer, yet *Exodus and Revolution* is unmistakably the work of a professional political philosopher. The book is studded with allusions to the *Aeneid*, the speeches of Oliver Cromwell and the categories of Isaiah Berlin. The key to Walzer's reading is Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*, and how many of us have looked at that thesis lately? Still, Walzer's prose is pure and sensible, and he leads us without pedantry to exacting conclusions. Between the lines of syllogism, we discern a man's hope for justice, the more welcome at a time when any effort to help unfortunate people in this country is increasingly regarded as an intrusion on private happiness or, for that matter, on Jewish interests.

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But *Exodus and Revolution* is most welcome precisely because the question of what makes for American Jewish interests cannot be settled with elbows alone. The secular Yiddish world of Jewish immigrants is gone, and the notion that it can be replaced by vicarious Zionism is going fast. American Jews who persist in the spirit of Eastern European Orthodoxy face no serious crisis, but the rest, indeed the majority, have no clear sense of Judaism's future. Can secular Judaism be taught to children? Inadvertently, perhaps, Walzer's book demonstrates that secular Jewish life may yet be possible in America, but only if intellectuals of Walzer's skill and reputation help make Judaism a civil religion; that is, if Judaism's ritual laws and classic literature can be made a part of the American Jew's "ethical" imagination.

Walzer insists that his book is not intended as instruction for any particular religious group in America. Yet as if conscious of setting an example, Walzer read the entire Pentateuch (not always in translation), the Prophets, the Writings and the Midrash. He consulted a good many of the most influential Rabbinic commentators, including such pre-Enlightenment thinkers as the Vilna Gaon (the Sage of Vilna), and took up the work of contemporary Rabbinic scholars such as Nehama Leibowitz and David Hartman. In fact, Walzer shows that some rabbis' concern for ethics aids a secularist reading of the text. To the extent that eschatological questions touch on ethics, he implies, Rousseau may have lacked the "tough realism" of rabbis like Maimonides.

Walzer's clear affinity for Maimonides is particularly appropriate because Maimonides, too, was faced with a crisis of Jewish continuity brought on by the experience of toleration. Maimonides wrote the *Guide of the Perplexed* in Arabic 800 years ago. The perplexed, then, were Jewish scholars—some, Maimonides' own students—whose reverence for Jewish law had been undermined by the claims of Alexandrian philosophers. By the time he finished writing the *Guide* in 1190, Maimonides had come to the view that a close study of Aristotle's *Ethics* illuminated what Moses intended by law. Have Jews needed Rousseau all along to grasp what Moses intended by freedom?

Exodus and Revolution is composed of four chapters, whose titles suggest a paradigm for why political revolutions happen (and may be justified), what rhetoric recurs when they do happen, how they are likely to be led and what their limits are. First, there is "The House of Bondage," where the Israelites are reduced, "crushed down," by the double oppression of hard labor and capricious rule. The Israelites grow disgusted, and fascinated, with the corrupt physical power and sexual abandon of their masters; in dialectical consequence, they yearn for freedom, though only intuitively. It is Moses who organizes victory over Pharaoh; and it is Moses' Levite priests—the revolutionary vanguard—who guide the people's thoughts to the Promised Land of milk and honey. (Since this is a secularist's reading, Walzer has little to say about the source of Moses' inspiration.)

The rapture of leaving Egypt, like the song of Miriam, is short-lived, however. In his second chapter, "The Murmurings," Walzer shows how at the first sign of hardship—while Moses ascends Mount Sinai to receive the Law—there is dissension among the Israelites. Why, many ask, did Moses bring the people out of bondage only to die in the wilderness? One hears the forlorn hope of returning to Egypt's "fleshpots"; there is the orgiastic worship of the golden calf. Not until Moses descends from Sinai—and his Levite henchmen kill (or, as Walzer allows, "purge") the leaders of the various tribes, some 3,000 men and women—are the people forced to be free. Only then are they prepared to receive the covenant.

How can this covenant be grasped, and in what spirit do the people receive it? The third chapter, "The Covenant," suggests that it might well be understood in ethical terms, as a kind of social contract by which the individual Israelites reach beyond themselves. Walzer's material conforms most clearly to a Rousseauian pattern here, which, remarkably enough, some of the Rabbinic literature helps focus.

After Sinai, Moses—the charismatic legislator—evokes a spontaneous com-

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mitment from the people to keep to God's laws. The text states that "all the people answered together." Does spontaneous mean voluntary? For Walzer's part, the question is resolved by *Mekilta De-Rabbi Ishmael*, according to which the Israelites all entered into the Sinai covenant consciously:

> They did not give this answer with hypocrisy, nor did they get it one from the other, but all of them made up their minds alike.

To be sure the people did not produce God's laws but these, in turn, are the product of what Rousseau called the general will, that is, what any reasonable man would will were he informed, cultivated and able to keep in mind not private advantage but the general welfare. By Walzer's account, the First Commandment—to serve God—seems nothing more than a metaphorical way of expressing the Israelites' huge effort to be reasonable. Thus, the Israelites at Sinai "embody the excellence of man"; and the covenant entails accepting not only the ethical precepts of the Ten Commandments but other laws that make the Israelites "moral equals," "responsible," "radical voluntarists," "communal."

"What does the Lord require of thee," Walzer quotes the prophet Micah approvingly, "but to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

In his final chapter, "The Promised Land," Walzer abandons Rousseau for those tough-minded rabbis—again, Maimonides—who teach the limits of messianism. Exodus, Walzer believes, engendered what is properly called historical time. That is its tour de force. Yet the Exodus story has prompted some prophets to imagine what, finally, Rousseau imagined: an era of perfect harmony, unity, serenity, peace—what some have called the end of history. Thus, there is this from the Syriac Book of Baruch:

> And disease shall withdraw
> And anxiety and anguish and lamentation pass from among men. . . .
> And wild beasts shall come from the forest and minister unto men.

Messianic visions are wonderful, Walzer concedes, but they are also terribly dangerous. They insinuate contempt for the here and now for the sake of an unrealizable future. They provide a rhetorical advantage to demagogues who would have us justify cruel means by invoking stirring ends. Besides, they are out of spirit with the terms of the Exodus covenant. In contrast with messianic politics, Walzer poses the ideal of "Exodus politics," which implies an awareness of our unending capacity for "backsliding," of the endless "marching across the desert, teaching, learning, obeying the law":

> And even if the promises were fulfilled, the result would still be a holy community living in historical time, its citizens farming the land, waiting for the rain, watching for foreign enemies, celebrating the seventh day and the seventh year and the jubilee.

The presumption that the best we can hope for includes watching out for enemies—who are enemies, it seems, because they are foreign—may rankle with some. For me, those words conjure not the fulfillment of God's promise so much as an idealized vision of Kibbutz Degania (the first kibbutz) between the world wars. Still, Walzer's distinction between messianic politics and Exodus politics trenchantly expresses his preference for tolerance over perfectionism. Accordingly, Walzer's "Conclusion" defends the Labor Zionist's willingness to partition the Land of Israel over the scripture hawk's will to annex it. Exodus politics also suggests the superiority of the welfare state to the communist apparat.

Can anything be wrong with a view of the covenant that gives us so much? At the risk of revamping Walzer's secularist ground rules, I want to return to that word "holy" which, in spite of himself, Walzer cannot avoid using at the climax of his argument. Can "holy community" mean something less than a community struggling to achieve the fear of God? Or, to put this somewhat differently, is it possible to understand how the story of Exodus unfolds without seeing the longing for God as its driving force? There is more at stake here than a difference of opinion regarding the logic of a cherished text.

If, indeed, it is not possible to separate the secular from the sacred in Exodus, to detach Moses' ethics from his call to faith, then perhaps it was also a more difficult matter for the Israelites to enter into the covenant than Walzer, following Rousseau and some rabbis, would have us believe. And if it was Moses' fate to offer a covenant few could undertake, did the revolution of the priests really succeed? Was the book of Exodus an example of Exodus politics or just another messianic tragedy? (The purges, again, come to mind.)

The most direct way to get at what Exodus means by "holiness" is to put the book in its place, that is, between Genesis and Leviticus. Do these books suggest that holiness is ethical grace? Immediately before encountering Moses, we leave the story of Joseph, who suffered at the hands of his brothers—in part because he was his father's favorite and, in any case, because he had dreamt he was above them all. But the text states that Joseph suffered inwardly, and continued to suffer at least until his father's death, simply because he could not get his brothers to see what he saw: purpose in a man's dreams, immanent order out of scattered human wills—indeed, a divine will whose justice is not readily grasped. (Why was Pharaoh's winemaker pardoned and his baker hanged?)

Now, Joseph's brothers were not slavish people; they were the great-grandsons of Abraham, the grandsons of Rebecca, the sons of Jacob. Still, they seemed unable simply to inherit faith in the One God. When Joseph, now Pharaoh's deputy, reveals himself to his brothers for the first time, he reassures them, "Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves that you sold me hither, *for God did send me before you*, to preserve life." His brothers, it seems, can no more comprehend this explanation as adults than they could put up with his self-centered dreams as youths. Indeed, the last we hear from Joseph is when he and his brothers are accompanying Jacob's remains back to the land of their forefathers; they have just passed the pit into which Joseph had been thrown before being sold, and the brothers, seized by panic, beg Joseph not to take revenge. This drives Joseph to tears. "Am I in the place of God?" he weeps.

Consider, in contrast, the pivotal chapter of Leviticus, titled Kedoshim, or "Holy Ones." It is here, as Walzer notes, that Moses explicitly commands the people of Israel to be a holy community. Does a holiness of social contract anticipate what this chapter requires? To be sure, there are a number of ethical injunctions that support Walzer's reading. Moses commands the Israelites to leave gleanings for the poor and pay workers' wages on time. He forbids them to curse the deaf or put a

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stumbling block before the blind, to favor the mighty or allow a neighbor to be attacked with impunity. Yet the first proscription in Kedoshim (as in the Ten Commandments) is of idol worship, and the major part of the injunctions have to do not with righteousness but with purity:

> Thou shalt not sow thy field with two kinds of seed; neither shall there come upon thee a garment of two kinds of stuff mingled together. . . . Ye shall not eat with the blood, neither shall ye practice divination nor soothsaying. Ye shall not round the corners of your head, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.

Indeed, Kedoshim suggests so many ways people might defile themselves before God, especially in perverse sexual acts—and reveals so little mercy for those who lapse—that one leaves the chapter wondering if God is not mocking human beings by insisting we are made in His image.

In subsequent chapters, it must be said, there are the makings of a reconciliation. Having failed to elicit from the people a sense of what is holy by means of animal sacrifice, the priests adopt a more gradualist, less shocking way. They take the best part of the bread, of the oil, of the cloth—and of the week—and separate these from the common, treating them as holy. Thus, they imply what the rabbis came to call Halakha, the way of the Law. The cabalists thought of Halakha as fragments of holiness (or Kedusha) for everyday life, as if in acknowledgment that Moses' faith is otherwise unmanageable.

Incidentally, in his *Shemona Perakim*, Maimonides wrote that had the Ten Commandments not been given at Sinai, "it would have been proper for mankind to add them." But the ritual commandments were another matter. These, he thought, were to be obeyed out of awe before God and were the more awesome precisely because it is not unreasonable to violate them: "Were it not for the Law, they would not at all be considered transgressions."

So Leviticus, like Genesis before it, teaches a version of holiness that is, if not incompatible with a secular social contract, then not quite compatible with it either. Holiness is not the satisfaction one gets from doing good, rather it is the condition for *wanting* to do good. Moreover, holiness is always something ecstatic, not—as with ethics—the alleged product of reason. Indeed, holiness seems an intuition that the senses report too little, that something ought to order our lives according to an apprehension of perfect harmony, unity, etc.—the very qualities that, in Walzer's view, make for good poetry and bad politics.

Is holiness, then, something the Israelites aspire to more readily merely for having been purged? Unquestionably, the text implies progress. Yet even after Sinai, Moses continues to seem as frustrated in trying to convey his vision to the people as Joseph was with regard to his brothers. The one time in Exodus the people seem genuinely to share in Moses' exquisite feelings, and act in a way that is unambiguously voluntary, is when they are invited to offer adornment for the sanctuary, the Tent of Meeting where Moses encounters God in the aftermath of Sinai. Then, all bring "a free-will offering unto the Lord," nose rings and earrings and signet rings; "the blue, and the purple, and the scarlet and the fine linen." Sadly, the exercise gets out of hand; the people bring too much. "So the people," the text continues, "were restrained from bringing."

Sadly, again, we are no more initiated into Moses' vision than the people were. The text scrupulously avoids trying to tell us how holiness feels, though it does state that Moses' first encounter with God, at the burning bush, occurs just after the birth of his son Gershom. Nor are we told how holiness can be captured. What we are told are the dimensions and refinements of Moses' sanctuary, and the text uses as many words to describe these as it uses to narrate his confrontation with Pharaoh. We are told, in addition, that the sanctuary was pitched far away from the Israelite camp, that Moses entered alone and that seeing him enter, all the people worshiped from afar, every man at his own tent door.

In that sanctuary, Exodus concludes, Moses spoke to God "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend," and he pleaded with God to pardon "this stiff-necked" people and take them "for His inheritance" in spite of their shortcomings. By the time God and Moses complete their meeting, Moses' face gives off light. He puts on a veil to inform the children of Israel of the terms of the covenant; he takes off the veil when he returns to the sanctuary.

Are revolutions inevitably led by such people—in D.H. Lawrence's words—in whom one detects the Holy Ghost? Is bondage the source of our desire for freedom, or does that source lie in an intuition of an end to history which, inevitably, yields cruelty? Can it be that in embodying the excellence of man, the Israelites are not so much defined by the covenant as afflicted by it? Shrewdly, perhaps, Walzer refuses these questions. Still, it is hard to read through Exodus without wondering if the children of Israel were envious of Moses, entering that tent, emerging with his face beaming. We envy them just for having been there to see him. Is envy a secularist's faith? □

ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

The Albertina Drawings

Those partisan to a dialectical interpretation of history might find a delicate confirmation of their views in the example of paper. The invention of printing necessitated the production of quantities of reasonably priced paper. But the availability of paper in large quantities is also credited with the emergence of drawing as an autonomous mode of artistic expression in the early fifteenth century. Since drawing is the paradigm of artistic spontaneity, there is a felicitous irony in the fact that the mechanical has given rise to the spontaneous.

Until an affordable supply of paper allowed drawings to be saved or even done for their own sake, it was common for them to be destroyed, either in the course of transferring their images to the panels on which paintings were to be executed or, if they were done directly on those surfaces, by submerging them forever under layers of glaze. There is a poignant drawing in Antwerp of Saint Barbara done directly on a panel by Jan van Eyck, who evidently lacked the heart to stifle it with overpainting—evidence that the sacrifice of drawing to painting was not a matter of indifference to artists. With the advent of industrial papermaking, the pleasures of drawing could be indulged at no great material cost to the artist, and as drawing shifted its status from means to end, draftsmanship became cultivated as a special accomplishment. Almost instantaneously, all the aspects of an art market fell into place: collecting

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gave rise to the specter of the mere copy, if not the downright fake, and fear of fraud in turn gave rise to the connoisseur. One of the great collectors and connoisseurs of the eighteenth century was Duke Albert von Saxe-Teschen, whose massive collection of works on paper constitute the basic holdings of the Albertina Museum of Vienna. Seventy-five of the Albertina's graphic treasures enhance the exhibition spaces of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City until May 26, enabling us all to ponder the nature of drawing on the basis of some of its greatest instances.

To some degree, this is to ponder the nature of paper. For some of the physical properties of paper underlie the expressive properties of high draftsmanship in the West. Rembrandt's drawings, of which three are on display, presuppose a surface sufficiently absorbent to preserve the fluidity of his strokes while not so absorbent as to blot. So the strokes remain exactly as they were made, and the work is a visible transcript of the act of drawing it. What is true for pen strokes is true for washes: the splash with which a full brush defines a group of trees is self-recording, and is given a dancing vitality by the texture of the paper coming through. There is a soaring study of an avenue of cypresses by Fragonard, where the trees are summoned into being by wet touches: the paper sustained the artist's confidence that one spot would be dry enough to keep from puddling with the next spot, so the individual touches sum to a cascade of leafiness. Such effects couldn't be got on parchment or vellum, which in any case have no significant texture of their own to contribute, and demand slower procedures.

The texture of paper is more important for pencil line and chalk stroke, providing the friction needed to abrade them into tiny particles between which minute patches of untouched paper scintillate. Watteau, according to his friend and dealer Gersaint, was vexed by the discrepancy between his drawings and his paintings: he could not give to the latter "the spirit and truth he knew how to give his crayon." But surely the difference is as much a function of the paper as the crayon, as in the luminous "Two Studies of a Young Woman," where the felted texture of the paper infuses the shadow on the woman's cheek with the effervescence of life. One would have had to use canvas in ways unacceptable to the eighteenth century, drag a brush dryly across the woven texture, in order to get a comparable vitality. But this would be to submit the logic of paint to the imperatives of drawing.

There are deeper liberations still. The edges of a sheet of paper do not seem to have mattered as much as the edges of a canvas or a panel. That is, the outer edges of the paper did not constitute the inner edges of a figurative window, to use the Renaissance metaphor for a painting. A window opens to the fullness of reality, which requires that every portion of the surface be accounted for in terms of a correspondent portion of the deeper reality. But the space of the paper was so much undifferentiated blankness, and the edges merely circumstantial. So there would be no need to compose a drawing in relation to the boundaries of the sheet, and the artist could crop the paper he did not use, or draw several images on one piece, with no implication that they belonged together. The two women in Watteau's drawing have no spatial connection—how could they, being the same woman drawn twice? (If the same woman were painted twice in the same panel, that

GLACIAL VALLEY, LATE JULY

Drawn to the scarred earth's secret part, where perils
trade us like pennies—out of hand—we chose remembrance
for our trophy and forgot the cost. In time
the tangible spring caught fire, burned broadside, lit
its testament of summers that we only
seemed to know by some analogy; but this
remained our charge, our one compulsory revenge.

I read your voice like a poem. It led me
back to what I'd never known so steadily:
that chasm in each sound from which things break like
sudden elegies—that gouged-out, unrecuperated
space in which, still fixed to your inflections, still
unfilled, our dangerous home returns like a
letter with the wrong address, a bank check drawn
on insufficient funds. It disinherits
us once more. Denying all the timely fables
that we gleaned from purple loosestrife and the
reticence of buttonbush, it puts an end
to anecdote, discredits the accounts we
gave of being born complete in one another,
as if we, self-made, had uttered this
initiating cry and merged with it, become
vibrations—part of nothing, nor apart, but
in ourselves.

Those were the promissory notes
through which I heard, instead, these hollows that displaced
your sounds and left me at a loss to say just how
this glacial valley, where the rocks all lean one way—
you told me once they lean toward August—streaked
as if they too bore marks of old alignments; how
your unfamiliar versions of our history,
which always end, familiarly, in bed;
how all this slanting present splintered from that
past so that the split itself connects them, keeps
them both within this system that allows no
loss, no gain, and no revenge but repetition.

Splitting off, we reproduce what we divide:
a doubled home—like all snares empty, but for
us. And still the future, with its widening
procession, springs from this: the trap we're chosen
by, the unforgiving fault we always choose.

Lee Edelman

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would imply a temporal dimension: they would be stages in the life of the same person.)

Even in what must be one of the most fully finished drawings in the show—not to say one of the most celebrated drawings in the world—Dürer's "Praying Hands," we have, in effect, a fragment. The hands come out of carefully drawn cuffs attached to sleeves that fade off in casual brush strokes. The sheet itself is cropped, and in the lower left corner is the vestigial indication of a shoulder Dürer evidently saw no reason to go further with. A drawing is finished at any point where the artist stops, but in Dürer's time this could not have been true of painting: an unfinished painting would have to be of an unfinished reality, of which there could be none. Only Michelangelo, as far as I know, exploited the energies of drawing in a medium—sculpture—that otherwise simply inherited the realistic premises of the Renaissance painting. Michelangelo left an abandoned arm in the Rondanini Pietà just as Dürer left an abandoned shoulder. He treated stone as most artists treated paper. The use of paper prefigures the modern idiom of juxtaposing forms and images we are not required to integrate.

There are further properties of paper that connect with the mystery of drawing as such. I am using the word "mystery" unfloridly and descriptively, to designate a certain possibility of illusion which makes the simple act of drawing a matter of the most primitive fascination. When one inscribes a line sufficiently defined to be read as an edge, it not only implies the form it belongs to but that form immediately comes forward while the surrounding area recedes. And the form acquires an instant solidity by contrast with the blankness against which it stands out. But what is remarkable is that this happens without any further modification of the uniform tone of the surface. It does not change shade. Even so, one area will look solid and near and the other empty and far. That with a single stroke one can create solidity and space is as astonishing an act of creation as sundering dark and light by the utterance of a word. This mystery is overlooked when we think of drawing simply in terms of tracing outlines or replicating external forms, important as these functions have been in the practices to which drawing is central.

The mystery is nowhere better exemplified than in what I regard as the greatest drawing among the great ones here: Rubens's "Saint Catherine." The saint's neck is sweetly bent, awaiting the sword stroke which will terminate the suffering she has endured and confer the martyr's station. But the head is twisted upward as she perceives, as we know from the painting for which this was a study, angels bearing the emblems of her triumph. Her body is twisted in a reverse spiral, turning away from the agony her head awaits. Look closely at the back of her neck. Rubens has drawn it with a single curve, as fine as a hair. It divides the paper cleanly. Beneath the curve the neck is solid and vulnerable. Above is the nothingness of blank paper. The whole of Saint Catherine's story is condensed in that one line. Its fragile submissiveness implies the brute swordsman.

In addition to substance and space, the great draftsmen could create light. There is a standard illusion in the psychology of perception: a line, in dividing a tone, seems instead to separate two tones, one darker than the other. There is a nursing Madonna by Dürer here in which this marvelous illusion is exploited. Without the tone of the paper being different, the mother and child appear luminous, their brightness more intense than the whiteness of the paper, even though exactly the same wavelengths would be reflected by the infant's head as by the area behind the Virgin's mantle. The same illusion is achieved over and over in the show, most dramatically, perhaps, in a late fifteenth-century Netherlandish depiction of Christ bearing the cross. That cross is the color of the paper, it *is* the paper, since the master who executed it left the cross a pure blank, or nearly pure. But it takes on a radiance that does not belong to the paper outside the area of the cross. Indeed, the cross itself is hardly even drawn: the artist has drawn what surrounds it in such a way that the spectator completes it through what psychologists call subjective contours. To be able to explain the effect would be to understand the eye, the hand, the nature of illusion, the power of art.

Perhaps this is enough by way of pedagogy. You are now on your own to enjoy the show. I cannot forbear mentioning an elephant by Rembrandt so awkward as to confirm a thesis of Gombrich, that artists have to discover a "schema" in order to represent something with conviction. But elephants were too little a part of life in the seventeenth century for an elephant-schema to have evolved, and even Rembrandt lost the battle to contain that unfamiliar bulk: Walt Disney (alas) could do it better. But I prize the drawing for the struggle. Nor can I forbear, again, from directing your attention to Jan Gossaert's "Fall of Man," in which Eve and Adam are portrayed with so much sexual tension that Adam's right arm has grown a left hand. And surely you will want to pause—as if she would let you pass by!—and admire the sly courtesan Urs Graf has drawn holding her skirt up as she steps into the river in an act supposed to be a metaphor for losing one's virginity. And oh! The Breugels! The Luini! The Saenredam! That Greuze! . . . □

FILMS.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Enormous Changes at the Last Minute

They're blaming the ravages of time—that defenseless scapegoat—for Laurence Olivier's costly gaffe at the Academy Awards, where he neglected to announce the five nominees for Best Picture, and instead blurted out the one winner, without so much as an "Envelope, please" for suspense. Five fabulous promotion packages, prepared at enormous expense with a full list of producers' credits, were thus tossed onto the trash heap of video history, never to be seen by the billions of Oscar fans (China was accessed this year) throughout the planet. But I prefer to believe that the wily living legend Olivier, his mortal coil in disrepair and his hour upon the stage drawing to a close, feigned forgetfulness as an act of protest against the middlebrow kitsch that was proposed as the best and brightest of world cinema this year. Hollywood is everywhere immortal except at two small pressure points, where the ego and the wallet approach the surface of its bloated body. Olivier hit both; the old entertainer's aim is still true.

There are any number of angles from which to approach the failure of Hollywood films, which even *Entertainment Tonight* recognizes as a problem of new magnitude. The devolution of the movie audience from mid-adult to

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OF ISLAND ANIMALS

It's the lean legged egrets
which make me think most of risk,
of this tenuous world so near the marshes.

What ruthless lives they lead
alighting each day near a different cow,
their slender bills prodding the center of one's head,

another's spine, preening that small spot
in the herd for a day,
until months have lapsed and these simple birds

have had them all, tasted each in our herd
and abandon this island for another.
That they live such frugal lives is plain

as they lift over our marshes,
their ivory wings folding beside them.
That's how we are: Our own lives as tentative.

This morning I think of you everywhere,
Of my habit of restlessness,
how I've locked you away from me

and come like the hungry birds to this island,
a consequence of desire and desired distance.
That I see you in the faces of small animals

makes me know I must let you go,
that the risk which draws
me here is like a wind:

Once unloosed it spends itself.
For nights I have listened to the wild mink
slinking beneath my cabin, preying

on the remembered taste of his first hen,
her crimped wings, that tender world
which inhabited itself so compactly.

He had our nine hens,
waited a spell, then
returned for the single wild dove

which thrived among them,
the peculiar one to the hungry mink.
That's how our love is:

at first the parted lips
humming and brimming with song,
the quiet middle time,

the eventual abandon.
What the egrets and mink share
is a world which rewards them,

something invented and fresh
each time they return to it,
and hold it in their beaks and jowls.

But it, too, wells before them
like the first remembered world,
the one abandoned so long ago.

Tonight my body is a slip of moon,
a leafy glen in autumn
offering its light to you for nothing.

Henri Cole

pre-pubescent is a definite drawback; kids go straight from bar mitzvah parties to *Porky's Revenge* and *Vision Quest* in suburban mall cinemas the way their parents used to go downtown to see *Mrs. Miniver* after a bridge game. Then there's the Potlatch Factor, the new rite of film finance in which producers accumulate all the capital they can locate and throw it down the drain, like Kwakiutls on a final binge. The result is *The Cotton Club*, *Heaven's Gate*, *Dune* and other flightless turkeys that are remarkable only for their size.

Looking at the Oscar nominees Olivier stuffed into a memory hole suggests another, perhaps more culturally relevant, aspect of film failure. None of those entries (and few other conceivable contenders) were remotely concerned with the way we live now; with the American community, or any recognizable segment thereof, in its native habitat; with the artfully arranged presentation of everyday activities by ordinary people which would make the screen either a mirror or a window for the audience. *Amadeus* showed the way a bunch of bewigged neurotics lived in eighteenth-century Vienna; *The Killing Fields* presented everyday life in the Cambodian charnel house; *Places in the Heart* was a fantasy of rural community in the Depression South; *A Soldier's Story* cut a thin slice of black barracks life in World War II Louisiana; and *A Passage to India* was about this elephant. Each, in its way, was elegantly executed, richly detailed and well acted (always excepting Alec Guinness's unforgivable charade in the elephant movie). Hollywood is nothing if not state-of-the-art. But what art?

We move now from the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in L.A. to the Film Forum in N.Y.C., where a movie is showing that goes against every grain of Hollywood in the 1980s and emerges as a most contemporary, credible and conscientious work. *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute* is composed of three stories by Grace Paley, connected in time, place and spirit but not in plot. The composition was conceived by Mirra Bank and Ellen Hovde, New York filmmakers and film editors, who also directed the individual segments, separately or together. John Sayles adapted the stories for the screen (with Susan Rice), and Muffie Meyer, who directed *Grey Gardens* with Hovde, also directed one of these segments with her. In other words, an

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active, energetic and somewhat self-conscious film community set out to make a film, and their product convincingly reflects their project.

The stories circulate around three women living unmated, but not unattached, in the same pre-gentrified part of Lower Manhattan. Virginia (Ellen Barkin) is deserted by her husband in the opening minutes of her segment, and thereafter sets about surviving in the confining environment of hungry kids, smarmy welfare workers, a cranky neighbor and an old beau who's thick around the middle, married in the suburbs and as lustful as a teen-ager on the landing. Life ir Virginia's flat is nothing like a day at Kate and Allie's. No sitcom producer could make each episode come out with this woman's world intact. So although Virginia is not desperately seeking someone to help her with the kids, the bills and the lonely nights, the question is negotiable when the old beau knocks. And in any case, as cranky Mrs. Raftery (Sudie Bond) says, "there's not a man alive who will last you a lifetime."

Faith (Lynn Milgrim) is more confined and more desperate. And also more culturally mobile: her apartment is filled with books (she's a freelance editor) and her bed is occasionally shared with men of literary bent. Her father is a bearded poet with a Talmudic conscience and a beatnik sensibility, and that makes things tough for her mother, who must have been one of the ladies who went to see *Mrs. Miniver* after the bridge game. Faith's children are comforting—sometimes; more often, they are merely necessary components of her community, like her parents. Faith cannot control any of them, but she must live with them and like it, which is what a community means.

Alexandra (Maria Tucci) was once married to a revolutionist—"what you call an 'activist' today"—but he is making revolutions far away now, and she lives alone in her father's comfortable rent-controlled apartment. Her attachments are to pregnant teen-age girls, recovering drug addicts and her ailing father. The last thing she wants is an affair with a punky taxi driver/rock-and-roll musician half her age (Kevin Bacon), and—we're talking enormous changes—that is of course what she gets. It's a good thing he could not possibly last her a lifetime.

Paley, Sayles, Bank and Hovde have a wonderful sense of women in New York, and a devastating nose for men. Their characters are infused with irony but not overcome by it. They are smart but not chic, alert but not trendy, warm but not all gooey inside. And they do live the way we live now, without splatter, disasters or elephants. Just a little poetry, and a touch of rock-and-roll. □

THEATER.

PAUL BERMAN

Pantomime
Kafka: Father and Son

The long lead time for theater reviews at *The Nation* makes it difficult for this column to keep current; but in lack of currency is wealth. Like a doctor at a hospital where the ambulance is slow, I am spared the need to attend certain patients. They have already expired; the other critics have done them in. Therefore I wander down to the morgue. Anyone breathing here? One does sometimes see this. Those other critics, you know.

An example: Derek Walcott's two-man *Pantomime* which appeared to thunderous unacclaim for a short run at The New Theatre of Brooklyn. An English actor has ditched his life in England and gone to manage a hotel in Tobago, where his black Trinidadian servant brings him breakfast and repairs the sun deck. The Englishman is liberal-minded, has no truck with racism, is not even a fervent defender of property. He would like to strike up an egalitarian friendship, which under happier circumstances might have been possible. The Englishman has a music-hall background, the Trinidadian a background in Calypso. Ham calls unto ham, and these men rather like each other. They prepare a hotel entertainment based on Robinson Crusoe and man Friday, which to be sure sounds less than promising. But the spirit is good. White will play black, black will play white.

Racism, however, isn't an attitude, it is a social structure; it isn't or needn't be a doctrine, it is something that happens in relationships. That is what Walcott shows. All the good will in the world can't hide that the Englishman owns the hotel and the money and the Trinidadian owns the poverty. One has the power to command, the other the obligation to submit. There is the

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history of England to consider, and the history of colonization. There is even a linguistic division. Who owns the English language? The man who owns the hotel, naturally.

What the Trinidadian owns is a mixture of English and Creole, also a habit of standing aloof from language, inspecting it, making it rich, turning it into art. Tension between English and Creole is of course an element of Walcott's poetry—just as tension between English and Gaelic is an element of Seamus Heaney's, and tension between English and Yiddish has made for some of the best American prose. Miscegenation is the key to the modern world. The periphery rises against the center. Study prosody closely enough and you arrive at anti-imperialism.

Pantomime is a trifle long and sometimes contrived, especially when the conclusion turns out cheerful. But the play is very witty and was excellently performed. The audience in Brooklyn laughed merrily. Count Stovall made a sly Trinidadian, Chuck Stansky demonstrated his range of music-hall skills as the Englishman and Kay Matschullat directed splendidly. And where were the celebratory poster-size reviews hung on the wall for the audience to peruse during intermission? There were no reviews. Possibly somebody will have published one before my own notice reaches print, but where were the critics who could have alerted the world in time? Ambulance, oh ambulance!

A worse case: *Kafka: Father and Son*, by Mark Rozovsky, arrived at the morgue recently after receiving, as far as I know, no more than two paragraphs of mention anywhere—and those paragraphs a spade and a shovel. Rozovsky, who wrote *Strider: Story of a Horse*, is a Soviet author who would have liked to attend La Mama's American premiere of his Kafka play but was not permitted to by his government. That, along with the title of his play, led me to expect a satire on bureaucracy and tyranny. In fact the play is strictly psychological. We see Kafka, 36, quarreling with his elderly Father. Son is thinking of getting married. Doubts and terrors plague him. There's much to discuss.

So they talk, which is to say, spend an evening knifing each other with truths. Father has always loomed like a giant in Son's eyes and has crushed him with his giant's power and insensitivity. So Son

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declares, and we believe him. Father replies that power and insensitivity are the staff of life. Father is crude, simple, joyful. Son could use a little of these qualities. That is equally believable. Father complains that endless accusations from Son have weighed him down, that it has been terrible to receive nothing but blame. Son is a parasite; he sucks his Father's blood. This, too, we accept. And Son replies that Father is still a giant—for these paternal accusations are undeniably just and utterly devastating and they have crushed Son once again. True!

Is it like that in Kafka's Prague or Rozovsky's Russia? I cannot say, but I have seen just such crude, insensitive, joyful giants and their neurotic, terrorized, all-seeing victims; and I know that Rozovsky has evoked the Bronx.

The play has some of the intensity of Kafka himself, from whom the dialogue has been adapted, an intensity that comes from enormous compression of thought and feeling, so that every line carries a truth on the surface and another truth below and an electric charge from one to the other. The direction by Leonardo Shapiro was a little techno-happy and broke the audience's concentration by means of offstage loudspeakers and mirrors that revolved undependably. But there were brilliant aspects, too, which managed to distort the sense of distance between audience and stage so thoroughly that Christopher McCann, who played Kafka the Son, seemed to loom as if in a close-up, like one of those famous photographs of Kafka's face and haunted eyes. Sam Gray was a veritable Grand Concourse of a Father.

And to think that such a play has come and gone without an escort of critics waving and shooting fireworks. Much attention has been given recently to a weak play about T.S. Eliot and a very bad one about Virginia Woolf, both at the Public Theater, while the really good one was playing in obscurity around the corner at La Mama. Coroner, oh coroner! What is that clawing in the wooden box over there? □

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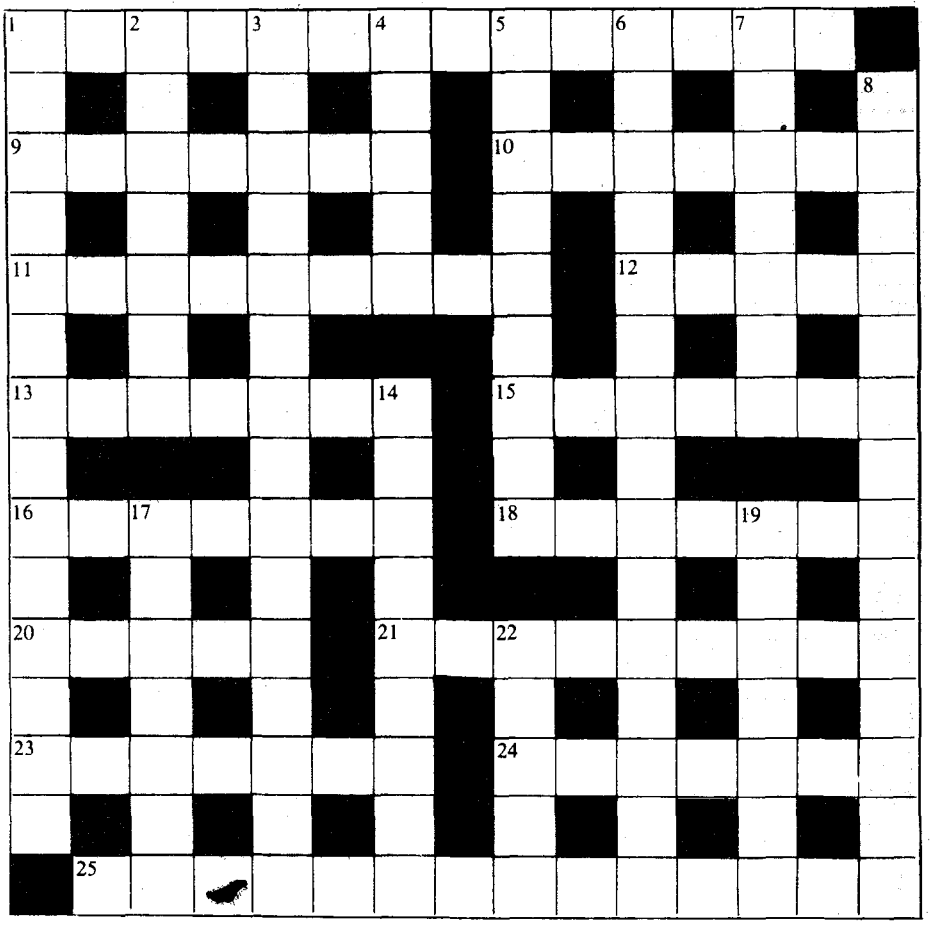
Crossword Puzzle No. 2051

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 A sort of amphora, against which one might find a series of illusions. (14)
9 You might find a number in the one who taught the King of Siam a sort of feeling with it, perhaps. (7)
10 Look for Olivia and Viola in such a night as this. (7)
11 An article taken out of uranium to tell if you need another element. (9)
12 A check given on account, perhaps. (5)
13 Ignore the girl—one a pirate might have been acquainted with. (7)
15 One who stacks cowhide on horsehide? (7)
16 Early channel swimmer? Hero-associated, perhaps. (7)
18 What spoke the Lion of Judah? (7)
20 Nothing put on the result of the wound? That's what the actor deserves, possibly! (5)
21 Disguised in the garb of aspiration. (9)
23 A badly prepared pie does, as part of the story. (7)
24 Permission to pass on, with a will? (5,2)
25 Off and on. (14)

DOWN

1 A wag should be useful as such! (9,5)
2 Was to later on reveal a spot of Arthurian romance. (7)
3 The sort of joint one gave ground to. (6,3,6)
4 A ship—possibly a man of war. (5)
5 A bad-times area for the plant. (9)
6 Such a suit is easily pressed. (4-3-4,4)
7 A crusader might have come across one in the Cuban leader. (7)
8 Questioning the fare to Paradise? (One might have seen stars in it.) (4,5,5)
14 The bucket brigade—not the regulars on the field! (5,4)
17 Game one might approach with a sort of caution? (7)
19 Covering the ruins of a minaret. (7)
22 The brilliance of Alec Lathram. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2050

W	A	T	E	R	O	N	T	H	E	■	O	V	E	R
H	■	A	■	E	■	I	■	O	■	W	■	I	■	O
I	N	K	L	I	N	G	■	P	H	A	N	T	O	M
P	■	E	■	G	■	H	■	E	■	R	■	I	■	A
■	C	O	N	N	O	T	E	S	■	B	R	A	I	N
P	■	U	■	■	■	C	■	■	■	R	■	T	■	E
R	E	T	C	H	■	L	A	W	G	I	V	E	R	S
I	■	■	■	O	■	U	■	R	■	D	■	■	■	Q
V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	■	■	E	L	I	H	U
A	■	A	■	C	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	M	■	E
T	E	S	L	A	■	B	Y	T	H	E	W	A	Y	■
E	■	K	■	K	■	A	■	L	■	A	■	G	■	P
E	Y	E	L	E	T	S	■	I	G	R	A	I	N	E
Y	■	T	■	S	■	E	■	N	■	E	■	N	■	T
E	A	S	Y	■	B	R	I	G	A	D	I	E	R	S

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> **Dear Friend at the IRS:**
>
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For more information about war tax resistance and alternative tax funds, contact:

National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC)
PO Box 2236, East Patchogue, N.Y. 11772
(516) 654-8227

Westchester War Tax Resistance Committee/WESPAC
Box 488, 255 Grove St., White Plains, N.Y. 10602
(914) 682-0488

War Resisters League
339 Lafayette St., N.Y.C. 10012 (212) 228-0450

New England War Tax Resistance
Box 174, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, Ma. 02139
(617) 731-6139

Philadelphia War Tax Resistance/WRL
2208 South St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19146
(215) 545-4626

Metro Atlanta Tax Conversion Group (404) 577-1498
1425 Miller Ave., N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30307

Center on Law and Pacifism
Box 308 Cokedale, Co. 81032 (303) 846-4545

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